

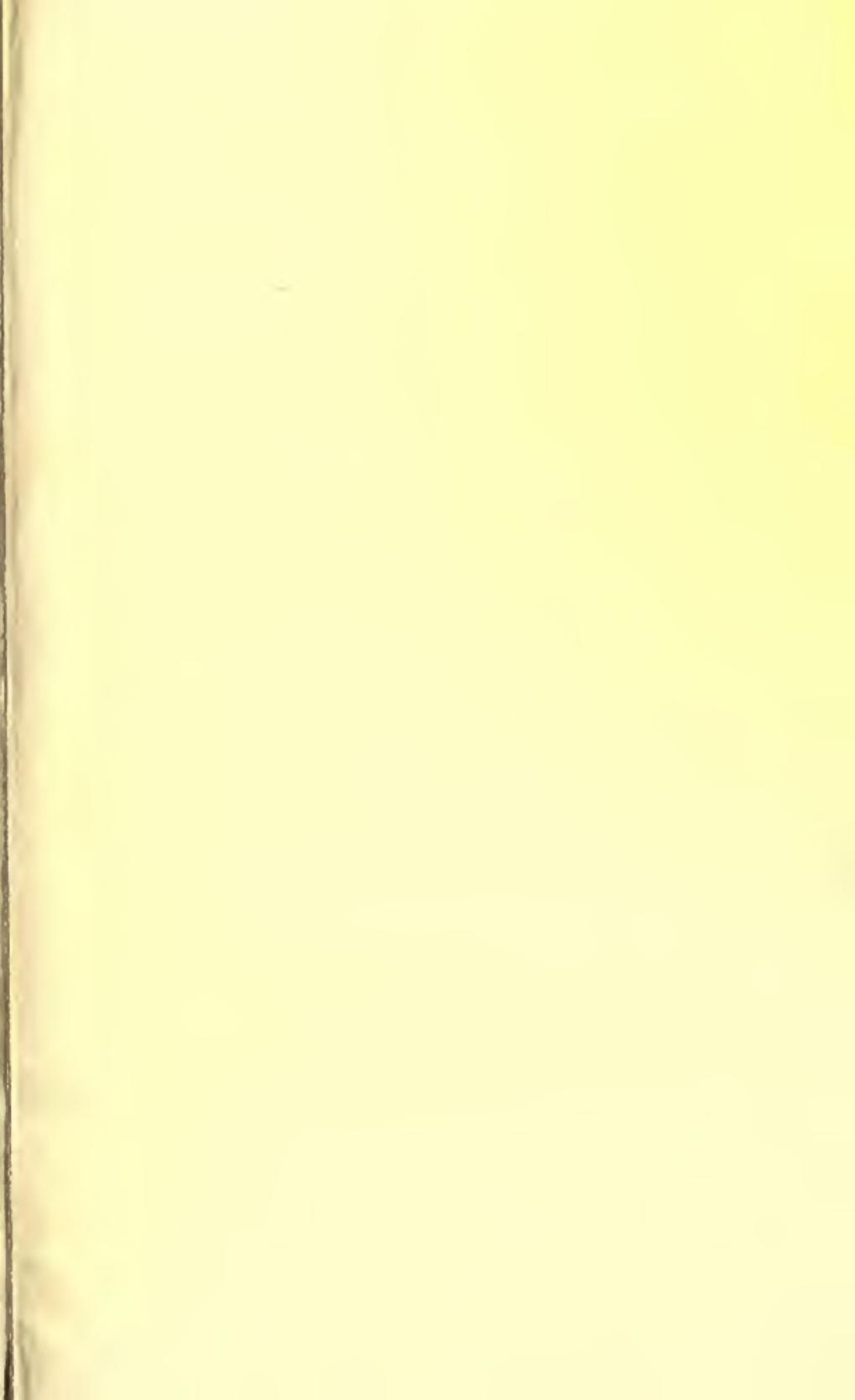
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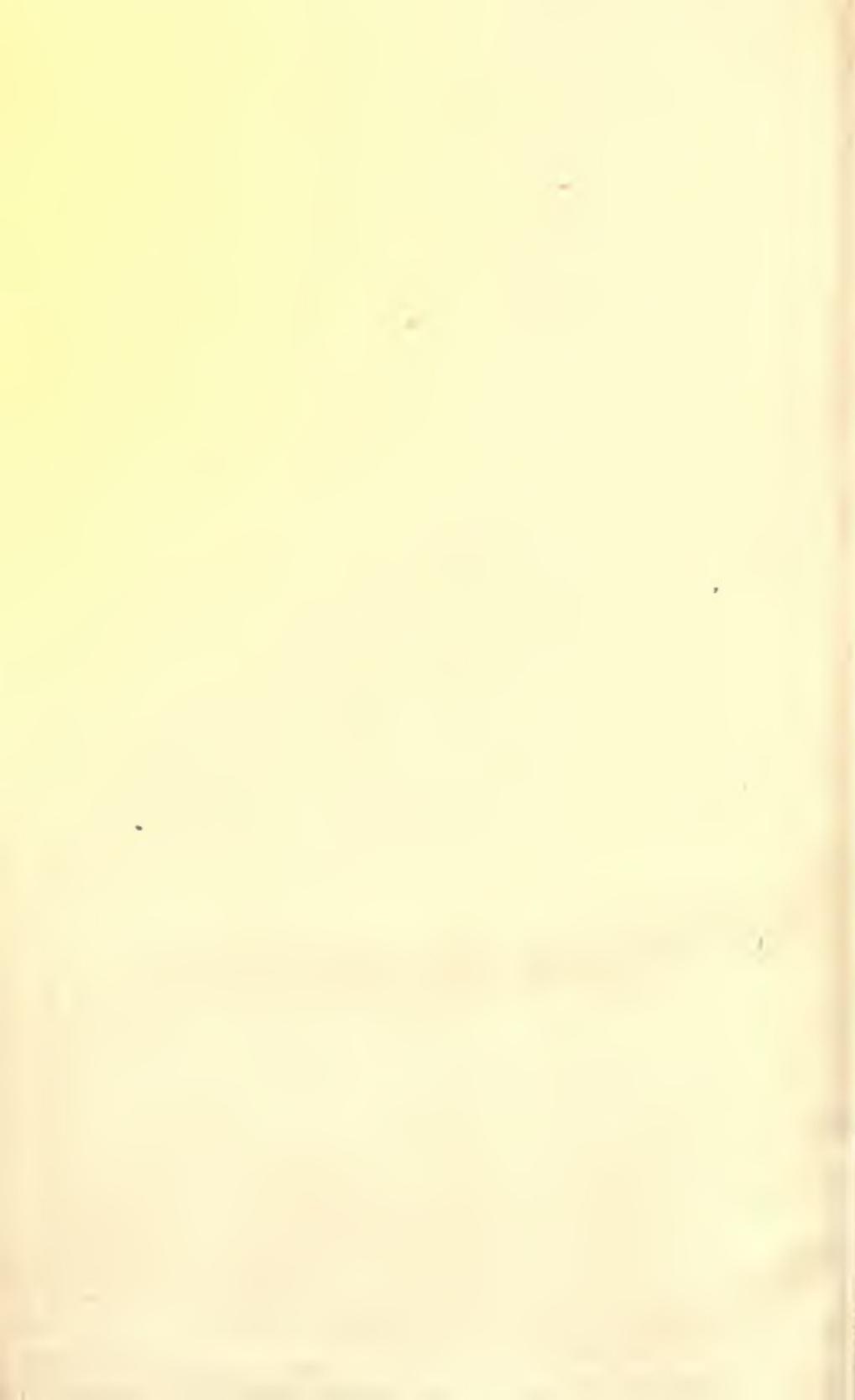


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CHARACTERS, SCENES, & INCIDENTS,
OF THE
REFORMATION.

CHAPTER I.

Rise of pure religion in France—Lefevre—Francis I.—Margaret of Valois—Persecution—Meaux and its bishop—Calvin—His writings.

No one part of the earth transmits light to another ; the same glorious orb sheds that element on the face of the globe. In like manner Germany did not, in the sixteenth century, communicate truth to Switzerland, nor Switzerland to France ; it was received in different countries at the same time, from the same God. Its central doctrine arose in the private dwelling or the stately temple of people the most remote and diversified, because the Day-star from on high was visiting them, and one and the same Spirit produced among them the same faith.

In tracing, for example, the rise of pure religion in France, where, as in other countries, corruption had long prevailed, the eye is at once attracted by Lefèvre d'Etaples, a doctor of the law, and a preacher of theology in the University of Paris. He had been a strict observer of the rites of Romanism until he had passed more than fifty years of life, but the discovery of a Bible in the university was the means of casting a new and heavenly light over his darkened mind.

He did not, indeed, detach himself from the church in which he was ; nor did he, like Luther and others, expose and denounce its evils ; his great concern was to find for himself the comforts of the gospel, and to diffuse the truths which, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, he was led to embrace. It would have been much to have done so among the common people; but he was a teacher whom many loved, and the young and ardent spirits of the university gathered around him, and eagerly received the doctrines that fell from his lips. Thus he obtained the eulogy of Beza, who describes him as “that good old man,” “the first who began the revival of the pure religion of Jesus Christ.”

Another remarkable person arose under the following circumstances :—“ In those Alpine countries,” says D’Aubigné, “ then suffering under the fanaticism of Rome, at the distance of three leagues from the ancient city of Gap, in the direction of Grenoble, not far from the enamelled meadows that clothe the table-land of Bayard’s mountain, at the foot of the Mont de l’Aiguille, there stood, and still stands, a group of houses, half hidden in trees, and bearing the name of Farel. Covering an extensive space of ground, elevated above the surrounding cabins, in those days stood a house of the kind called *gentilhommières*. It was encircled with an orchard, stretching to the village. There, in those troubled times, was the residence of a family of ancient piety, of noble blood, as it seems, and bearing the name of Farel.”*

One of the children, named William, was born in 1489 ; and on the banks of the Buzon, and at the foot of the Bayard, he passed the days of childhood and of youth. “ My father and mother,” he afterwards said, “ believed everything”—thus denoting their devoted adherence to the papacy. Accordingly, they

* History of the Reformation, p. 434.

brought up their children in the same superstition.

Young Farel appears to have felt also its full influence. He thought himself capable of exorcising evil spirits by the sign of the cross. His first pilgrimage was made to the holy mountains, to a cross near Tallard, in the diocese of Gap, said to be taken from our Lord's cross ; and he afterwards adored at Paris another cross, declared to be made from the same, although the wood was of a different kind.

But in this deplorable condition he was not to continue. Circumstances of the deepest interest were now transpiring. Dauphiny had recently been added to the crown of France, and shared in the care of Louis XII., whose reign, notwithstanding its wars, was regarded by his subjects as a golden age. In advanced life, and only three months prior to his decease, he married Mary, sister of Henry VIII.

It was the patriotic desire of his son-in-law and successor, Francis I., that his nobility, instead of wasting their time in field and other sports, should become acquainted with literature and science. With this there was entire sympathy on the part of young Farel, and he

entered the University of Paris. But the philosophy then prevalent served rather to darken than enlighten the human mind. The authority of the church, and the discipline of the school, alike forged for it fetters, and some new power was requisite to restore it to liberty.

It was from no sordid, much less licentious motive, that Farel still adhered to the Romish church. He firmly believed that God had appointed the pope as its visible head, and that obedience to him was essential to salvation. His superstitious reverence for the virgin Mary was also extreme. The legends of the saints inflamed his imagination ; he bowed humbly before their images, celebrated their festivals, invoked them as intercessors, considered pilgrimages to their shrines as meritorious, and trusted in the efficacy of their relics. He had no doubt that the wafer, when consecrated, was the true God. It would have been difficult to find one who more sincerely and heartily embraced the soul-destroying errors of Popery. They gave, however, no peace, no satisfaction to his mind. The fountain from whence these blessings can be derived seemed beyond his reach. He desired to become a Christian indeed, and he was directed to the volumes of Aristotle. It was as

if a child asked bread, and he were given a stone.

On turning to the sacred oracles, he was struck with the contrast between its precepts and doctrines, and those of the Romish church. Now commenced a serious and earnest struggle. He endeavoured to hold to the authority of the church, and to believe that the real meaning of Scripture was at variance with its obvious interpretation. Still he could not be satisfied ; meanwhile some seeds of Divine truth fell on his mind, and speedily, through the power of the Holy Ghost, they began to vegetate.

It was the counsel of a learned friend that he should not enter on the study of the Scriptures, till he had made greater progress in philosophy. But it was counteracted by the example of Lefèvre, who became the beloved tutor of Farel. While still engaging in the ceremonial of the mass, and offering homage to images, he took his pupil by the hand, and said : “God will renovate the world, and *you* will be a witness of it.” And in a Commentary on Paul’s Epistles, he thus expressed his hopes : “God, in his great mercy, will soon revive the expiring spark in the hearts of men, so that faith and love, and a purer worship, may return again.”

So great was the reverence of that venerable man for the saints and martyrs, that he compiled an account of their lives ; but while the work was passing through the press, he was struck with the impiety of the prayers addressed to them. He now renounced the study of their legends, and devoted himself to the Holy Scriptures. In the glory and efficacy of the work of the great Redeemer, the merits of the saints, which he had once so highly extolled, were utterly lost. How important was the resolution at which he arrived : “ We will follow what is certain, and abandon what is doubtful. We will cleave to Christ alone, and to the doctrine of the apostles, which points out to us the way of salvation. There is only one religion ; it has one foundation and object, one head, even Christ, who alone is to be worshipped and honoured.”

Farel wavered at first, between the ancient superstition, and the truth which was shining with increasing clearness on Lefèvre’s mind. It exerted, however, some influence. But another friend was the means of leading him to the foot of the cross. How great was the effect he has clearly described : “ When,” he says, “ the corruptions of the Romish church are unveiled

to the soul that has been drawn aside by them, its sense of their enormity is so overwhelming, that only the clear exhibition of the welcome doctrine of salvation by Christ can preserve a man from utter despair, or losing his senses." He now found peace, to which before he had been a stranger.

Continuing his other studies, he applied very diligently to the Hebrew and Greek languages, that he might the better understand the word of God. He now made rapid advances in the knowledge of truth. It was the period when Luther had begun his career, and had produced a powerful impression in France, notwithstanding the decisions of the Sorbonne, the college of the Faculty of Theology at Paris. The Scriptures became clearer ; the prophets and apostles more intelligible ; above all, Farel heard the voice of Jesus with unwonted distinctness, and the flame of love—love to God and love to man—burned more vividly and intensely on the altar of his heart.

Farel now forsook the communion of the Romish church, with feelings of self-reproach, and abhorrence of the errors by which he had been enthralled. On visiting his native place, he saw with grief the low state into which

morals and religion had sunk, especially at Lyons. But that was only one spot in a widely extended scene of corruption.

Meanwhile the University of Paris had made some progress in Protestant principles. It was asserted in a work by cardinal de Vio, that the pope was absolute monarch of the church, and the sovereign desired to have the opinions of the university on this treatise. One of the youngest of the doctors, named Allman, wrote an answer to the cardinal's work, and this being read before all the professors of theology, obtained for the writer great applause.

The bishop of Meaux received the truth as ministered by Lefèvre, though he did not separate from the church of Rome. He was the friend, adviser, and correspondent of the princess Margaret of Valois, duchess of Alençon, the admired and gifted sister of Francis I. With her, too, Farel often conversed ; and she became, it is generally believed, a sincere and devout follower of Christ. She discovered also literary talent and taste. Accompanying her brother and his court in their royal "progresses," she is said to have written tales in her litter, exposing the superstitions and vices that prevailed among the professedly religious

orders. She produced also some spiritual poems.

Francis for some time attended the university, then resorted to by students from Germany, England, and other countries, who brought with them the writings of Luther and other reformers. He founded two professorships of Greek and Hebrew at Paris. He called the learned persons he patronized "his sons;" and it even seemed not unlikely that, under his sister's influence, he might be brought to favour the Protestant cause. But though he loved literature and the fine arts, he was gay, superstitious, dissipated, and far from the kingdom of God.

The ratification of his concordat with the pope, whose train he held up in the cathedral of Bologna, declared his true character, and excited in Paris great commotion. It was regarded as a very serious infringement of religious liberty. The students of the universities went in procession to church, to pray that God would defend their country, marched, in armour, through the streets, and even threatened or attacked distinguished persons who were carrying the king's order into effect.

A singular charge of heresy was brought against the venerable Lefèvre; it was that of declaring that Mary Magdalene, Mary the sister of Lazarus, and the woman who washed our Lord's feet with her tears, were three distinct women. But Francis interposed, and rescued Lefèvre from imminent peril. When, too, a party of doctors waited on him in one of his progresses, to complain of the heresy that prevailed in the universities, he declared his unwillingness to disturb those who taught, "lest men of letters should be prevented coming into the kingdom."

As Lefèvre was still regarded with malevolent feelings, he was compelled to leave the university, and he took refuge with the bishop of Meaux. Concerned that the French should be able to read the Scriptures, he published a translation of the New Testament and of the Psalms. The bishop of Meaux sent the princess Margareta a copy of the Gospels, beautifully illuminated, praying her to present it to the king, her brother, and saying, that such a gift from her hand could not but be agreeable. This was about the time that Luther's New Testament was issued in Germany, and in France the effect was similar on the minds of the people.

Meaux was now a centre of attraction to those who held what was called the new doctrine, and Farel, assailed by persecution, went thither to join Lefèvre and others of kindred sentiments. Briçonnet, the bishop, had returned from the Vatican, to which he was sent with an embassy, unmoved by its splendours, and only intent on discharging his appropriate duties. Favourably disposed to the great truths of Christianity, he introduced them into his sermons, and enforced them by his own exemplary life. It was his wish that his visitors should assist him in preaching and training the young ; this they did ; and, among other young persons, Jean Comte de la Croix, a nobleman of Paris, was prepared for his future Christian career.

Lefèvre now wrote his Commentary on the Four Evangelists, and also translated them into the vernacular tongue. This labour was most obnoxious to his opponents, especially to the monks. When, for example, he was expressing to Farel, on one occasion, his sanguine hopes that the pure gospel would soon be spread throughout France, a monk rejoined, “I and the rest of the friars will raise a crusade, and drive the king out of his kingdom, by means

of his own subjects, if he permit what you call the preaching of the gospel."

The exertions of the bishop of Meaux and his friends induced many to leave the Romish church. The Franciscan monks suffered in their vocation, and took the alarm. They felt, with some of old, that their craft was in danger. They sent word to Paris that heresy, originating in the episcopal palace, infested the city and its environs. The bishop successfully exculpated himself, but he was obliged to withdraw the permission he had given his friends to preach, and persecution commenced against those of the lower orders who had embraced the reformed faith.

Jean le Clerc, a wool-comber, was beaten for three successive days, and branded on the forehead ; while his Christian mother stood by, and exhorted him to remember the sufferings of the Lord Jesus. Others, among whom was Farel, sought safety in flight. The bishop, undaunted, attempted to effect in other parts of his diocese what he could not accomplish in the city, and the patience and stedfastness of those who suffered called forth fresh confessors.

The place to which Farel fled is not fully

determined. It appears, however, he was not wanting in activity or zeal. As he was in the habit of taking frequent journeys, there is reason to believe he was the instrument of leading many in his native province to the exercise of a purer faith. Certain it is, that the gospel was diffused in Dauphiny at an early period, and with considerable success. Among its most zealous adherents were Farel's brothers, and a knight named Anémond de Caet, lord of Chastellar.

The history of Farel, so far as France is concerned, terminates at this crisis ; we shall hereafter mark his course in the land to which he subsequently fled, and now proceed to trace the rise of one of his most illustrious associates.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, there lived in a small village of Picardy, towards the north of France, a poor but honest man, who obtained a subsistence for himself and his family by making vessels, used by the peasants for storing the fruits of their vineyards. He and his wife were scrupulously observant of all the rites of the Romish church. A large family circle gathered around them in the same village.

The second son of these much-respected people, John Caulvin, in the Latin, Calvinus, and hence commonly called John Calvin, was born the 10th of July, 1509. He passed his early days with the children of the noble family of Mommor, the most distinguished in the province. Their instruction and discipline were afforded to him, and he is said to have excelled his fellow-pupils in acuteness of mind and power of memory. His noble patrons not only discovered but cherished the germs of his future greatness.

His father sent him, at his own expense, with his young friends to Paris. At the College de la Marche, he was under the care of its regent, M. Cordier, a man illustrious for his learning and piety, who afterward renounced Popery, and went to Geneva as a teacher, where he died at an advanced age. Under his guidance, Calvin laid the basis of those acquisitions which raised him to eminence, for the elegance and ease of his Latin style. He was subsequently transferred to the college of Montaigu, where his progress in the higher branches of education was equally distinguished.

Before he had attained his majority, he "received," says Desmay, a Romanist, "the

parochial benefice of Pont l'Evêque, where his grandfather dwelt and his father was baptized. Thus was the flock given in charge to the wolf." It must have been about the commencement of his university life, that Calvin first became acquainted with the Bible. It was, probably, only the Latin translation of Faber Stapulensis, or the ms. French translation of his kinsman, Robert Olivetan, made in 1520. From him he also received much religious instruction, and probably the first decided interest in the purer doctrines of the gospel was awakened by the same instrumentality. Referring to the ceremonies of the Romish church, Calvin says : " When I had performed all these, although I experienced some satisfaction, yet I was always far from absolute tranquillity of conscience ; for as often as I descended into myself, or raised my mind to thee, O God, extreme horror seized upon me, which no purifications, no expiations could appease. And the more closely I scrutinized myself, the more cruel were the goadings of conscience which I endured, so that I could not be undisturbed except by forgetting myself."

Calvin pursued his law studies at Orleans, and afterwards at Bourges. " At Orleans,"

says Beza, “there were already some men who knew the truth, but this was nothing, until Calvin, yet very young, but already chosen as a special instrument for the work of the Lord, came there to study law. By the grace of God, he devoted the best of his hours to theology, and, in a short time, so united wisdom with zeal for the kingdom of God, that he advanced it astonishingly in many families, not with formal language, which he always avoided, but with so great a depth, and so much dignity of speech, that even at that time no man could hear him without amazement. When at Bourges, also, Calvin strengthened all the faithful who were found in the city, and preached in the cloisters around. Among others, the seigneur of the little town, Lignières, who, with his wife, was accustomed to hear him, said of him, “This man teaches us at least something entirely new.”*

Of his course Calvin himself says : “ So soon as a desire for true holiness was awakened in me, I so longed for advancement that I pursued my other studies with indifference, although I did not entirely lay them aside. Before a year had passed, all those who loved the pure doc-

* Beza, Hist. Calvin, lib. i. p. 16.

trine were accustomed to come to learn of me, as yet but poorly instructed in it. Naturally timid, I always loved meditation and retirement, and especially desired some quiet retreat, in order to pursue my studies without interruption, but all my hiding-places became like public schools."

At the battle of Pavia, Francis I. was taken prisoner by the emperor of Germany, Charles V. During his captivity, the influence of his sister Margaret increased, and this she employed to the utmost of her power in favour of those who were exposed to persecution. Already she had pleaded their cause in the court of France, and sheltered them in her own little principality of Bearn. But she afterwards avowed her sentiments so publicly, that the constable Montmorency did not hesitate to say to the king, that if he would extirpate heresy, he must begin with his sister. His reply was, "Do not speak to me of that matter ; she loves me too well to think otherwise than I approve." And yet the contrary was the fact. Margaret wrote a book, entitled, "The Mirror of a Sinful Soul," at which the Sorbonne were greatly offended. She also had a prayer-book prepared for her use, in which all the invocations of the virgin Mary,

who was called the “mother of God,” and the saints, were omitted.* She, moreover, appointed Roussel, a reformer in principle and practice, to the bishopric of Oléron.

On the return of Francis from his captivity in Spain, he encouraged civil prosecution against all who were guilty of preaching the Lutheran heresy. The influence of his sister, and of the duchess d'Estampe, who was of kindred sentiment, was more than counterpoised by that of cardinal de Tournon, archbishop of Lyons, the king's principal adviser. “He alone,” it was said, “equalled in cruelty a whole inquisition.” In 1528, some persons were burned at the stake, and the king went bareheaded, accompanied by a procession of priests and monks, to see the execution.

Luther had been denounced by the Sorbonne as one of the worst of heretics, and they had issued their anathemas against his works, but this did not prevent their import or circulation. The reformed opinions were by their means spread, and many, in addition to those already mentioned, suffered death for the truth's sake.

On leaving the university, Calvin resided for a time in Paris. He now gave up all his previous

* Du Pin. tome 13, p. 174.

pursuits for theology, and the advancement of the “new” doctrines. He openly renounced the living that had been bestowed on him. He preached to the Lutherans, who were now accustomed to meet privately. The truths he had learned from the Scriptures, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, were just what were needed by those who had scarcely yet emerged from the darkness of popish ignorance.

To his labours at this time the following testimony is borne by Pasquier, a Romanist:*

“ In the midst of his books and his studies, he was of a nature the most active for the advancement of his sect. We have sometimes seen our prisons overflowing with poor misguided people whom he incessantly exhorted, consoled, and confirmed by letters ; and messengers were never wanting to whom the doors were open, notwithstanding the watchfulness of the jailers against them. Such were the measures at the outset by which he gained over, foot by foot, a part of our France. In like manner, after a long time, seeing a disposition to follow him, he determined to take a bolder step, and send us ministers, called by us preachers,

* *Recherches de la France*, lib. viii. p. 769.

(*predicants*,) to exercise his religion in secret, even in our city of Paris, where death-fires were kindled against them."

The severity of the persecution induced Calvin to publish an edition of Seneca's work, "De Clementiâ," hoping by this means to reach the king, who was accustomed to see all the literary productions of his subjects, and thus to show him the folly of his course. The original work recommended clemency to Nero, including in that term all the virtues that can be displayed in the intercourse of man with man, and pointed out not only the futility but the danger of tyrannical power. Calvin covertly wished to compare Francis with Nero, and to convey a threatening to the king, by intimating the instability of an oppressor's throne.

He added a commentary to the work of Seneca, in which he spoke out boldly and freely. It has been described as a specimen of learning and eloquence, unrivalled as the production of a young man at the age of twenty-three years. His work was dedicated as the "firstlings of his fruit," to one of his early associates of the family of Mommor, Claude Hangest, abbot of St. Eloi. "They belong," he says, "of right to you, since to you I owe myself, with all that

I possess, especially as I was nurtured as a child in your house, and initiated into the same studies with you."

The influence of the work was as little seen on Francis, as it was on Nero when first published. In the same year, he united in a new league with the pope against the emperor. Suspicion, too, was excited in reference to Calvin. An officer was dispatched to his lodgings, but he was either absent, or escaped from the window in a basket, in the guise of a vine-dresser. His papers, among which were many letters to his friends, were seized, thus causing his exposure to imminent danger. But Margaret, now queen of Navarre, interposed in his behalf, and that of others ; thus averting the impending storm.

Calvin first went to Angoulême, in Saintonge, where he was heartily welcomed by his friend, the canon Louis du Tillet. At the request of the canon, he wrote short sermons, or exhortations, which were read by the curates on the sabbath, and scattered among the people. He appears to have continued there some time. One hundred and fifty years after, his residence was remembered, for even then a vineyard bore the name of Calvin.

He now accepted an invitation of queen Margaret to visit her at Nerac. Here he first saw Lefèvre d'Etaples, who had found a refuge from the violence of the Sorbonne. This venerable man discovered at once the character of Calvin, and confirmed the queen in her prepossessions in his favour.

Calvin now described to a friend the troubles of the queen, from her attachment to the reformation. In her book, entitled "The Mirror of a Sinful Soul," she had substituted for many doctrines of the church justification by the blood of Christ. It excited, therefore, the indignation of the Sorbonne, and they placed it among the prohibited books.

CHAPTER II.

Calvin's return to Paris—The Placards—Policy of Francis I.—Publication of Calvin's Institutes—He visits the court of Ferrara—Persecution—Henry II.—The Inquisition established—Charles IX.—Catharine de Medicis—Dreadful massacre.

WE have just seen Calvin, in whom learning, genius, and piety, were happily combined, and who manifested also no ordinary energy and zeal, a wanderer for the truth's sake, and a visitor to the queen of Navarre. But in these circumstances, he did not long remain. Before the close of the year, permission was obtained by the queen of Navarre, for Calvin to return to Paris. Soon after, he wrote a work designed to refute the belief that the soul, separated from the body at death, remains dormant until the resurrection. It discovers, like the subsequent productions of his pen, a vigorous and comprehensive intellect and varied learning. The basis of his whole argument is Scriptural.

The notion he assailed had proved extensively injurious, and hence he rendered, in so doing, an important service.

Francis, meanwhile, had exposed himself to the suspicion of not being a good Catholic, particularly by his attack on the emperor Charles, who pretended to great zeal for the defence of the Romish faith, just as he was preparing for an expedition against Tunis. But he soon retrieved his character. The Sorbonne, in 1534, forbade certain Protestant teachers to hold public assemblies, and on turning their attention to private instruction they were consigned to close custody.

The friends of truth, however, determined on an appeal to the people. Accordingly, a messenger was sent to Neufchâtel to obtain a short summary of the reformed tenets. He returned with manifestoes, afterwards called "Placards," which were scattered in every direction, and even put up in the royal palace at Blois. In this there was an intemperate zeal, which many of the reformed did not fail to disapprove. But the consequences were very serious. On the 29th of January, 1535, the image of Genevra, the patron saint of Paris, was borne in procession, as was only done on occasions of imminent

peril. At its foot, the king, with his three sons, marched with uncovered heads and lighted torches through the city. The nobles and the court followed. In the presence of the assembled multitude, the king declared that if one of his hands were infected with heresy, he would cut it off with the other, and that if his own children were found guilty of that crime they should not be spared. During this procession, six martyrs suffered at the stake, in the frequented parts of the city ; but so enraged were the people at the sight, that the executioners could scarcely prevent their victims being forcibly snatched from the flames. The constancy of the martyrs strikingly showed the influence of the doctrines of the Bible, as preached by Calvin and his associates.

Soon after this cruel and infamous proceeding, Francis found that he had exceeded the bounds of policy in attempting to appease the Romanists. He greatly needed the favour of the Protestant princes of Germany to accomplish his political purposes, but he excited, by these acts, their high indignation. He, therefore, published an explanation of his conduct, in which he represented that he had only punished some enthusiasts who had substituted

their own inspiration for the word of God, and set at defiance all authority, both ecclesiastical and civil. He also sent for Melancthon to visit France, for the purpose of aiding in composing church difficulties. He, however, availed himself of an expedient of cardinal Tournon to countermand the invitation.

A decisive moment had now arrived for the reformation in France. All eyes were directed to the king, and according to his decision the current of opinion would flow. Already, in consequence of the recent persecutions, many weak adherents walked no more with those who were called to suffer. Calvin, therefore, decided to publish his "Institutes of the Christian Religion." He says, in his Latin Preface to his Commentary on the Psalms : " Whilst I was living in obscurity at Bâsle, after many pious men had been burned at the stake in France, and the report of this had awakened great indignation in Germany, wicked and false pamphlets were circulated, in which it was said that only Anabaptists, turbulent persons, who, in their fanatical zeal, would not only destroy religion, but even political order, had been thus cruelly punished. When I perceived that this was a court device,

not only to cover over the crime of shedding innocent blood, and to cast reproach on these holy martyrs, who had been slain, but also to give permission, for the future, to murder without compassion, I concluded that my silence, if I did not make a vigorous resistance, would be treason. This was the occasion of the first edition of my ‘Institutes.’ First, I wished to vindicate from unjust opprobrium the character of my brethren, whose death was of great value in the sight of God. Secondly, since the same death threatened many unhappy victims, I desired that other nations, at least, might feel some compassion for them.”

In order more effectually to reach the French court, this work, which had been partly prepared at Angoulême, during Calvin's stay there, was issued in the French language, while the Latin version was made in the following year, with special reference to Italy. This first edition, merely a germ of the work we now possess, was a small octavo, of about five hundred pages. Calvin speaks of it as meeting with a more favourable reception than he had anticipated. Men of all parties and ages, since its publication, have spoken most decidedly of the high qualities of this work. Paulus Thurius,

a learned Hungarian, declares that, "since the time of Christ, except the writings of the apostles, no age has produced anything equal to this book." "It contains," says Bretschneider, a leading rationalist of Germany, "a treasure of excellent thoughts, acute analyses, and apt remarks, and is written in an elegant, animated, and flowing style. The only thing analogous to this, in the Lutheran church, is the celebrated '*Loci Communes*' of Melancthon, which, for symmetry, for solidity of argumentation, polemical strength, and systematic completeness, cannot be compared with the work of Calvin."

Concerned to influence the mind of Francis, Calvin inscribed his work to that monarch. "This dedication," it has been said, "is a tribute worthy of a great king—a vestibule worthy a superb edifice—a composition worthy of more than a single perusal." But Francis was utterly unmoved. It has been supposed by some that he did not read the appeal; but this is scarcely possible, interested as he was in all that was transpiring.

After visiting the court of Ferrara, in Italy, Calvin hastened to his native city, to greet it, for the last time, and take a final farewell. It

was his purpose to go immediately to Strasburg and Bâsle, and here we shall yet have to contemplate him. His influence in scattering the “good seed” by the wayside in his journeyings, is shown by an account from the archives of the village Aosta. Here, either on his way to or from Ferrara, he preached the new doctrines, until he was compelled, by persecution, to leave. There is now, at Aosta, a pillar, eight feet in height, bearing the inscription—“*Hanc Calvini, fuga erexit anno 1541, religionis constantiam reparavit anno 1741.*” The event it commemorates occurred, undoubtedly, in 1536.

Henry II. succeeded his father Francis I. The Protestants now greatly increased. They followed the church model proposed by Calvin in his “Institutes,” and generally bore the name of that reformer. Instead of meeting privately, as they had done before, for religious exercises, they openly assembled in Paris for the worship of God. In Lyons also, they specially prospered.

But days of grievous persecution came. In 1549, Henry entered Paris, in a solemn procession, declared his detestation of Protestantism and attachment to Popery, avowed his resolu-

tion to banish the friends of the former from his dominions, and to protect the ecclesiastical hierarchy. He caused many Protestants to suffer martyrdom in Paris, and looked on the struggles of his subjects in the pangs of dissolution.

The aid of the inquisition was sought in this dreadful work, and it was armed with power to terrify all whose faith varied from that of Rome. A secret police was established, that the most private affairs might be made known to the inquisition. The court approved of these papal proceedings, and the king required for them the sanction of parliament. But that body presented to the monarch a spirited remonstrance; it produced some effect, yet none of real value.

The writings of the German reformers, though strictly prohibited, still gained, as they had done previously, admission into France. Even in the council, camp, and court of Henry, there were those who had received the truth. Notwithstanding the difficulty and danger consequent on so doing, the nobility attended the Protestant worship. A love of freedom augmented their ranks, and they soon appeared as a powerful body in the state.

The duke of Guise, and his brother, the cardinal of Lorraine, were violently opposed to such movements, and incalculable evil is attributable to their influence. A pleasant promenade in Paris, called the Clerks' Meadow, became a favourite resort of the Protestants, where they often united in the offering of praise. It was frequented by persons of the highest rank, the chief of whom were the king of Navarre and his queen, the daughter of Margaret of Valois. But these meetings were declared by the ecclesiastical tribunal to be seditious, and on the parliament refusing to interfere, the cardinal suspected that they were tainted with heresy.

At his instigation, the king was led to test the opinions of parliament by a most treacherous device. He entered the assembly, and invited its members freely to state their views as to “the new religion.” Some boldly avowed the reformed faith ; and in so doing, they were instantly arrested, and consigned to prison. Again persecution raged, numerous were its victims ; nowhere was a Protestant safe—but when death was impending over the accused, the king was killed in a tournament. But for this event, it is probable that Protestantism in

France would have been almost entirely destroyed. Henry was succeeded by Francis II., at the early age of sixteen, who had been previously married to Mary Stuart, afterwards queen of Scots.

In the reign of Charles IX., Catharine de Medicis, widow of Henry II., and mother of the three sovereigns who succeeded him, gained a dreadful notoriety for ambition and wickedness. Yet she sometimes affected to favour the Huguenots, as the Protestants were frequently called, and even wrote to the pope, asking that they should have service in their own language, and that the cup in the sacrament should be given to the laity. Not that she had any regard for them—she merely wished to gain their confidence and support. As regent during the minority of Charles, she felt her full ascendancy was prevented by the power of the Guises, and hence many of the measures she craftily adopted.

As the queen seemed to be identified with the Huguenots, the duke of Guise was invited to re-establish Popery. Alarmed at his approach, she threw herself on the Huguenots, and ordered the prince of Condé to take up arms against the enemies of the king and

the kingdom. She soon, however, found herself and her son in the power of the Guises. Again Protestant worship was disturbed, and the direst cruelties inflicted on those assembled. The prisons were filled with Huguenots, waiting their trials, and, without even the show of inquiry, multitudes were massacred. An appeal was made to the queen—she promised justice, but did not design to confer the boon. Beza complained to the king of Navarre, who treated him roughly, and even excused the massacres. “It belongs to the church for which I plead,” was Beza’s memorable reply, “to take rather than to give blows; but remember, religious liberty is an anvil, which has worn out many hammers!” Unhappily, that king had renounced Protestantism for an increase of territory. His queen, the estimable and pious daughter of Margaret of Valois, distressed on this account, was faithful to the principles she had espoused. “If I had the two kingdoms* in my hand,” she said, “I would throw them into the sea, rather than defile my conscience by going to mass.” Her husband soon died in his apostasy, being killed in the war that had commenced; but the queen, like her mother,

* Sardinia, and a part of Navarre, which is in Spain.

afforded shelter and protection to the persecuted.

In that war, also, some persecutors fell, and peace was now restored. At thirteen years of age, the king assumed the reins of government, declaring himself in favour of Popery, while his mother endeavoured to persuade the Huguenots that she was their friend.

The pope now desired that Catharine and her son should have an interview with the king of Spain, and devise measures for exterminating the heretics. The Spanish monarch sent as his representative the duke of Alva, a violent enemy of the Protestants. The parties met as arranged, aiming to conceal their designs, but these were soon apparent. Admiral Coligny was a distinguished Protestant, and his life was twice attacked by assassins, from whose hands he happily escaped. The king and his mother professed still to regard him with favour, but he reposed in them no confidence. He did not give up remonstrating with the king, but he soon learned that he was in imminent danger, and that a league was formed to destroy the Huguenots.

Another war now took place ; it was followed by a hollow peace, during which Coligny and

his friends escaped to Rochelle, where numbers flocked to them from all parts of France. At the head of those from Bearn appeared the queen of Navarre and her son. Alarmed at these proceedings, the court promised justice and protection, but utterly in vain. The cloak of hypocrisy was now thrown off, and Catharine revoked every edict that had, in the slightest degree, favoured the Huguenots.

Another course was now taken. Many of the principal Protestants were invited to Paris, under a solemn oath of safety, on the marriage of the king's sister with the king of Navarre. The daughter of Margaret, the queen dowager of Navarre, was destroyed by means of a pair of gloves, into which poison had been secretly insinuated before the ceremonial took place. Coligny was basely murdered in his own house; his body was thrown out of a window, and was dragged by the populace through the streets, and the king, who went to see it, remarked, with a brutal wit, that "the smell of a dead enemy was agreeable."

After this, the murderers ravaged the whole city of Paris. Charles ix. attacked in person his unresisting subjects with an arquebus, or kind of gun, and shouted with all his might,

"Kill ! kill !"^{*} The military, and the people attached to Romanism, thirsted for the blood of the Huguenots. One wretch boasted of having, in a single night, killed a hundred and fifty, and another of having slain four hundred. At midnight, the tocsin tolled the signal of destruction. The carnage lasted seven days. Mezeray reckons those killed in Paris, during this time, at five thousand, Bossuet at more than six thousand, and Davila at ten thousand, among whom were five or six hundred gentlemen. The court was heaped with the slain, on which the king and queen gazed not with horror, but delight. The city, as if it were one great butchery, flowed down with blood, and the Seine was covered with the dead that floated on its surface !

Nor was the direful tragedy restricted to Paris ; it extended throughout the French nation. A general massacre was ordered by special messengers on the preceding day. The carnage prevailed especially in Meaux, Troyes, Orleans, Nevers, Lyons, Toulouse, Bordeaux, and Rouen. According to Bossuet and Mezeray, twenty-five or thirty thousand perished in different places. A still higher number is given by Davila. Many victims were cast

* Sully, vol. i. p. 34.

into the rivers, carrying horror and infection throughout the country they watered with their streams.

And why this carnage? It was suggested that a conspiracy had been formed, but even Bossuet admits that every one knew it to be a mere pretence. The populace, under the instruction of the priests, accounted themselves the agents of Divine justice, and engaged in God's service, in shedding the blood of Huguenots. The king, accompanied by the queen, the princes of the blood, and all the court, went to parliament, acknowledging that all had been done by his authority, while they publicly eulogized his wisdom. Mass was celebrated to return thanks to God for this victory over heresy; and a medal was struck to perpetuate it, with the inscription, "PIETY EXCITED JUSTICE."

The massacre received the approval of the pope and the Roman court. The pontiff went in procession to the church of St. Louis, "to render thanks to God for the happy victory." His legate in France felicitated Charles IX. in the pope's name, and praised the exploit, so long meditated, and so happily executed, for the good of religion. "The massacre," says

Mezeray, “ was extolled before the king as the triumph of the church.”*

What language can describe the daring impiety of such pretences? The spirit which dictates the slightest act of cruelty is “ earthly, sensual, devilish,” and never does its true character become so conspicuous as when it is perpetrated under the sacred name of religion. Antichrist, throughout its history, has poured forth its malevolence; pure Christianity is “ full of good fruits.”

In the subsequent history of Protestantism in France there were many martyrs. Besides those who perished in the wars, no fewer than two hundred thousand persons suffered death for the truth’s sake between the years 1555 and 1598. There still remained, however, seven hundred and sixty churches.

* Mezeray, vol. v. p. 162.

CHAPTER III.

Visit of two hermits to the Tockenburg—Dwelling of Zwingle
—His early experience—Important conferences—Œcolampadius—Arrival of Farel—His various labours —Anémond—
Civil war—Death of Zwingle.

SWITZERLAND, far-famed as it is for vast ranges of mountains, rich and verdant plains, lakes of exquisite beauty, and cities and villages strikingly picturesque, presented in its natural charms, notwithstanding all the power with which they have been said to be invested, no counteractive to moral evil. In the sixteenth century, it stood in as much need of a reformation as any land, however bleak, and bare, and desolate. About its people there was an honesty that appeared strange, and even ridiculous, to those of Italy ; but it was said—and that was decisive as to their state—that they habitually transgressed the laws of chastity. The priests were no less criminal, in this respect, than their flocks, to whom they ought to have presented a

holy example. In such circumstances, other evils could not fail to exist; the sins of the Swiss "rose over their heads, and their iniquities mounted up to the heavens."

Towards the middle of the eleventh century, two hermits passed from St. Gall towards the mountains that lie south of that ancient monastery, and reached a desert valley, called the Tockenburg, which, on the eastern side, catches the rays of the rising sun, and discovers the splendid prospect of the Tyrolese mountains. At the source of the Thur, a small river, the hermits built two cells. The valley became gradually peopled, and in the most elevated part, situated 2,010 feet above the waters of Lake Zurich, there grew up round a church a village, named Wildhaus, or the savage house, on which two hamlets now depend. No fruits of the earth are gathered on these heights. A carpet of living verdure clothes the whole valley, and rises up the sides of the mountains, above which enormous rocks tower in grandeur to the sky.*

Not far from the church is still to be seen a lonely house, every part of which shows that it was built in very remote times, and before it

* D'Aubigné.

gushes a clear spring. Here lived, towards the end of the fifteenth century, a man named Zwingle, the mayor of the district. His third son, named Ulrich, was born in the lonely chalet, a few weeks after the birth of Luther, on the 1st of January, 1484. His early manifestations of superior genius determined his father to consecrate him to the church. With this intention, he sent him first to Bâsle, and then to Berne, where a school of polite literature had recently been founded—the first that had arisen in Switzerland. Here Zwingle found the aliment in which he delighted ; he became a scholar and a poet.

Here, however, he was placed in imminent danger. There was a great strife between the Dominicans and the Franciscans, and the former were earnestly and only intent on humbling their rivals. Hearing of Zwingle's precocious intellect, and remarking his fine voice, they urged him to reside in their convent till he might enter on his novitiate, and strove in various ways to attach him to themselves. But, providentially, the lamb was not permitted to be the prey of these wolves. The peril of the son reached the ears of his father, and Zwingle was required immediately to quit Berne.

In November, 1505, he was at Bâsle, and thither came Wittembach, who had taught at Tübingen, in conjunction with the celebrated Reuchlin, who had rendered great service to the reformation in Germany. He was not merely a man of learning, but of piety. Among other truths, he announced that "the death of Christ is the only ransom for our souls." Much of what he taught was received by Zwingle. He was chosen, from his reputation as master of arts, to be the priest of Glaris, not far from Wildhaus, in 1506, and applied himself zealously to the duties of his large parish.

Zwingle now attracted the notice of Schinner, who, from a poor lad, had risen to the rank of a bishop, and had succeeded, in 1510, in attaching the whole Swiss confederation to the designing and ambitious pontiff, pope Julius. Zwingle soon learned that the pope had granted him an annual pension of fifty florins, to encourage him in the culture of letters. At this time, Zwingle connected himself with Schinner, now a cardinal, and became one of the Romish party. In April, 1512, a large number of the Swiss, urged by the cardinal's eloquence, arose, as they thought, for the deliverance of the church, and as there was

a general levy at Glaris, the whole commune rallied around the banner of its confederates, and among them was their pastor, Zwingle, in the capacity of chaplain. Well had it been had they remembered that the weapons of their warfare ought not to be carnal.

Returning from this campaign, Zwingle applied himself diligently to the study of Greek, in order, as he said, "to be able to draw the doctrine of Jesus Christ from the very fountains of truth." To render himself more familiar with Paul's epistles, he copied the Greek text with his own hand, adding, in the margin, a multitude of notes from his own reflections, and also from the fathers of the church. He recognised, too, the infallible authority of the sacred oracles. He said, "It is not permitted men to bend the gospel to their own meaning, and to force upon it their own interpretation." To him the testimony was borne by his best friend, "Zwingle raised his eyes to heaven, desiring no other interpreter than the Holy Spirit."

The saying of our Lord, "Whosoever hath to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance," was verified in the experience of Zwingle. "I set myself urgently," he says, "to

beseech the Lord that he would grant me his light ; and though I read nothing but the Scripture, it became much clearer to me than if I had read many a commentary." It was his practice to compare one Scripture with another, and to obtain light on difficult passages from others which were more clear. He thus became acquainted with the whole Bible, and particularly so with the New Testament. " When Zwingle thus turned to holy writ," says D'Aubigné, " Switzerland made the first step towards the reformation."

He was subsequently led to consider the superstitions and abuses of the Romish church. Nor was he satisfied with exposing these apart from the proclamation of the gospel. In direct opposition to the ceremonial of the mass, he exclaimed, " Christ, who offered up himself for us once on the cross, is the host and the victim, that makes satisfaction to all eternity for the sins of the faithful." If some hesitated at these declarations, others recoiled from them with horror, while some received " the engrafted word, which is able to save the soul." The friends of Zwingle, indeed, became greatly multiplied, and the truth of God was extensively diffused. After a residence of ten years at

Glaris, he was sent for to Zurich, and installed as preacher in the cathedral in December, 1518, deeply regretted by the parishioners whom he quitted.

How Scriptural his teaching was, in the high position to which he was thus elevated, will be manifest from a few examples. "All men being dead in Adam," he said, "no one can recall them to life, till the Spirit, which is God himself, restores them from death." "Where there is sin, there must needs be death. Christ had no sin; there was no guile in his mouth; yet he died! For that death he underwent in our stead! It was his will to die, that he might restore us to life; and as he had no sins of his own, the Father, full of mercy, laid ours on him." "Since eternal salvation proceeds solely from the merits and death of Christ, the merit of works is but folly, not to say daring impiety. If we could have been saved by our works, it would not have been necessary that Christ should have died. All who have ever come to God, have come to him through Jesus Christ." "O God, most clement, most just, Father of mercies, with what charity dost thou embrace us thine enemies! With what grand and assured hopes hast thou filled us—us who should otherwise

have never known aught but despair ; and to what glory hast thou called in thy Son our meanness and nothingness ! Thou desirest us by this ineffable love to constrain us to return love for love." It would be impossible to find more Scriptural declarations than these as falling from the lips or pens of any of the reformers.

In 1522, Zwingle published a tract, "On the Observation of Lent." This was his first work, and greatly did it irritate the Romanist party. He therefore caused an assembly to be convened by the senate of Zurich, for the purpose of adjusting existing differences. It took place on the 29th of January, 1523. He stated the doctrines he held in thirty-seven propositions, fully persuaded that they were agreeable to the gospel of Christ. At the close of the consultation, the assembly passed an edict greatly in favour of Zwingle. After its publication, his doctrine became general throughout the whole canton of Zurich, under the name of evangelical truth.

Determined to introduce it into Switzerland generally, he induced the senate to call a new assembly. It was convened on the 26th of October, 1523, and various discussions took

place. One resolution of the conference was, that no images were to be allowed among Christians. In the next conference, the parties assembled discussed the mass. Zwingle maintained it was no sacrifice, and a decision to that effect was accordingly passed. These conclusions were not, however, received throughout Switzerland ; the cantons of Berne, Glaris, Bâsle, Schaffhausen, and Appenzel, refused to admit them. Meanwhile, Zwingle wrote several books in defence of his doctrines, and they were making progress in various directions.

An important accession had, in the mean time, been gained to the cause of the reformation, in Œcolampadius, a native of Winsperg, in Franconia. In 1515, he had received a call to the pastoral office, and was subsequently honoured with the title of Doctor of Divinity, by the University of Heidelberg. About the same time, Erasmus arrived in Bâsle, to publish his Annotations on the New Testament, in which Œcolampadius assisted. On the completion of that work, he entered the monastery of St. Bridget, situated without the city of Augsburg, and seemed, for a time, well contented with a monastic life.

But the urgency of friends. and especially of

one, named Capito, was the means, under Providence, of calling him forth, and inducing him to resume his public labours. In 1522, he proceeded to Bâsle, where he was made curate and preacher of the church of St. Martin, and where he speedily introduced the doctrine of Luther. Advanced by the senate to the pastoral office, he boldly exposed the errors of the Romish church, and zealously inculcated evangelical truth. He, however, attempted no alteration in the public worship of God until 1523, when he found the magistrates and citizens of Zurich disposed to cast off the doctrine of Rome, and to receive that of the reformation.

The reformers were now not free from disputes. Luther maintained that after the bread and wine are consecrated, the body and blood of Christ are substantially present therein—a tenet which is called consubstantiation. Zwingle was opposed to this view, and so was Œcolampadius, but on somewhat different grounds. Zwingle placed the stress of the words, “This is my body,” on the verb *is*, which he held was to be taken for *signifies*. Œcolampadius placed it on the noun “*body*,” and affirmed that the bread is called the body by a figure, which allows the name of the thing

signified to be given to the sign. Alike they agreed in the simply symbolical character of the elements, and sustained it in the work they wrote to confute that of Luther on the Eucharist.

In 1527, several municipalities of the canton of Berne addressed the senate for the abolition of the mass, and the introduction of the worship established at Zurich. Preparations were also made to give the proposed assembly the greatest possible solemnity. The presence of Zwingle was invited ; and he gladly availed himself of the opportunity thus offered for maintaining Divine truths. He, therefore, repaired to Berne, accompanied by several Swiss and German theologians, who had assembled at Zurich. As soon as they arrived the convocation commenced its sittings, at which the great council assisted. Ten theses, containing the principal points maintained by Zwingle, were duly discussed. So successfully were they defended by the reformers, that they gained over a great number of the clergy. The town adopted the reformed worship, and in the space of four months, all the municipalities of the canton followed the example.

A highly important service was rendered

to the reformation in Switzerland, when Farel fled thither from persecution in France. A close connexion existed between the two countries, and constant communication had been kept up, either by letter or personal intercourse, between those of similar sentiments and principles. The effect of this had already been felt by Farel.

In his little chamber at Aigle, he had read the first publication addressed to the German by the Swiss reformer. "With what learning," he exclaimed, "does Zwingle scatter the darkness—with what holy ingenuity he gains over the wise—and what captivating meekness he unites with deep erudition! Oh that, by the grace of God, this work may win over Luther, so that the church of Christ, trembling from such violent shocks, may at length find peace!"

Farel, on leaving his native land, repaired to Bâsle. Here he met with his friend Anémond, and several other fugitives from France and Lorraine, among whom were the chevalier D'Esche and Peter Toussaint, a native of Metz. He was received in the most cordial manner by Cœlampadius, and became his guest.

The occurrences at Meaux had excited universal attention. The fame of Farel, as a

corrector of abuses, had preceded him. The evangelical doctrine had gained many friends in the senate, and among the inhabitants of Bâsle. On the other hand, the members of the university, encouraged by Rome, were intent on its suppression ; but their attempts were abortive, and tended to promote the cause of truth.

Œcolampadius, therefore, posted up four important propositions, and invited all who had taken offence at his doctrine either to refute it, or to yield to the force of his arguments. After the public defence of his propositions, the general respect for his character increased, and the people felt a growing interest in such discussions, relating, as they did, to subjects of the greatest practical importance.

Farel applied in vain to the rector and prior of the university, for permission to exhibit and defend certain theses. The senate, on the contrary, granted leave to hold the disputation, and declared, "that the theses were framed in becoming language, that the sentiments were Scriptural, and conducive to general edification." The vicar-general, in conjunction with the heads of the university, however, issued an order to all the priests, students, and others, prohibiting them from attending the disputa-

tion, under pain of excommunication and banishment. A counter edict was now issued by the senate, requiring all such persons to attend the disputation, under penalty of being deprived of their benefices, and the protection of the laws.

In introducing the discussion, Farel said : "It is my opinion, that every Christian cannot do better than make himself thoroughly acquainted with the Truth, which Christ has declared himself to be." He called on all who were interested in behalf of mankind, and particularly the pastors and teachers of the church, to state with clearness and precision the grounds of their belief, as children of the light, without fear of doing wrong in making such a public avowal. He concluded with saying : "Hasten then, as the Lord enjoins, with a pure heart, and strive that the word of God alone may gain the victory. This I entreat and exhort, for the sake of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, who has so strictly commanded us to seek the welfare of our fellow-men."

The adversaries of truth, who had been so violently opposed to the meeting, did not make their appearance, but contented themselves with merely boasting, in private, how much they

could have done had they been there. Their conduct lowered them in the estimation of the people, while that of the reformers was proportionately favourable.

Farel rose greatly in the esteem of his friends on this occasion. His piety, learning, and Scriptural knowledge, combined with such courage and zeal, rendered him, in the judgment of Cécolampadius and others, more than a match for all the doctors of the Sorbonne. Though young, and a new convert, the effect of his exertions was, in many ways, beneficial.

His natural modesty restrained him, for a time, from becoming an author, but it was afterwards overcome through the encouragement of Cécolampadius. He drew up, with great brevity and plainness, "A Summary of what a Christian ought to know, in order to trust God and serve his neighbour." It was well received and went through several large editions. He afterwards sent various small treatises to the press, some of which were from his own pen, the rest written by others.

In these undertakings he was zealously assisted by his friend Anémond, who had frequently changed his residence for the sake of his own religious improvement, and to promote

the cause of the gospel. He fell ill at Schaffhausen, and sent for Farel, but died before his friend arrived. Myconius wrote to console his surviving friend as follows : “ Anémond is gone to Him to whose cause he devoted himself. I doubt not but that he will receive the reward of his faith, and of the sacrifice he has made for the advancement of the truth. Let us so live, that when our earthly tabernacle shall be dissolved, we may arrive where we trust Anémond has entered before us.”

It was to be expected that the priests would denounce the movements of the reformers. They even made the superstitious people believe that Farel and Viret fed devils, under the form of black cats, at their table ; that devils hung at every hair of Farel’s beard ; that he had no whites to his eyes ; and other things equally monstrous.

They sent for Guy Fuerbity, a Dominican, and doctor of the Sorbonne, hoping to aid their cause by preaching, and conducted him to the cathedral with great pomp, and with an armed escort. He chose for his subject, the soldiers dividing our Lord’s garments among them, which he applied to ancient and modern heretics, who divided the church, among whom

were the Waldenses, Lutherans, and Germans. His audience was a large one, chiefly of females. He attacked with great vehemence the readers of the Scriptures, the violators of fast-days, the despisers of the pope, and their protectors, and called them by the most opprobrious names. He exalted himself and his brother priests above the virgin Mary, pretending that they could draw Christ down from heaven, and transmute a wafer into a god !

Two reformed preachers happened to be in the church, and heard these impious pretences. At the close of the sermon, they offered to prove their fallacy from the Holy Scriptures. But, as on other occasions, their appeal was absolutely in vain. The adherents of the Romish church have always shrunk, and will continue to do so, from bringing their doctrines and practices to the test of the word of God. And now the spirit often displayed at such times appeared ; there was a great uproar, and a general cry was raised, " Away with them to the fire !" One of the preachers was seized, and sentenced to perpetual banishment on pain of death ; the other concealed himself, and was sought for in vain from house to house.

For seventeen years, twelve of the confederate

states had governed the province of Neufchâtel, on which they had seized in consequence of its proprietor, the duke of Longueville, having borne arms against them in the service of France. His widow, Joanna, margravine of Hochberg, was reinstated in her rights in August, 1529. As yet nothing had been done to promote the reformation, though the spiritual domination of papacy was not wholly unchecked.

Its cathedral had no services that could be the means of any real benefit. So far from being a temple, it was rather a sepulture of religion.

No wonder that the corruption of morals among the clergy was very great. Several benefices were held by the dean, an illegitimate son of the reigning prince. Concubinage was so common, that the founder of the chapel of St. William thought it necessary specifically to exclude such as practised it, or were otherwise immoral, from officiating at the altar. Nothing was heard of the Scriptures, except as burlesqued and travestied in pieces acted by the canons, and which attracted such crowds, that the magistrates were apprehensive for the safety of the town.

Such was the state of the country, when the confederated canons resigned the government to the margravine. She appointed as governor a nobleman in alliance with the Bernese, but zealous for the ancient superstition, to which the princess was also strongly attached. The superior clergy were rich, powerful, and corrupt ; the people untaught, rude, and warlike ; so that the state of all classes presented formidable obstacles to the adoption of a pure faith. Farel, however, was not deterred from attempting to sow the seed of the Divine word, nor were favourable circumstances altogether wanting. Berne had obtained a preponderating influence, owing to its security and friendly disposition towards the princess. The margravine was absent; and an impression generally prevailed throughout the province, that some changes in religious matters were absolutely necessary.

An evangelical minister, Dr. Wytttenbach, had laboured on the borders, even before the commencement of the reformation. He had been led to the study of the Scriptures, and was minister of the church at Ino, where he diffused the light of Christian faith, as he did afterwards more extensively at Biel. Emer Beynon, of St.

Inuer, vicar of Serriere, was also another, but timid friend of truth, to whom Farel repaired. Not being allowed to enter the pulpit, he began to preach outside the church, and continued to do so notwithstanding the opposition of the governor and the canons.

Many persons from the neighbouring towns, whose religious anxieties were awakened, came to hear him, and invited him to their houses, regardless of the offence it might give to their superiors. He preached in the market-place, in the streets, at the gates, before the houses, and in the squares, and with such persuasiveness that he won over many to the gospel, as well as secured their personal attachment. The people, not to be kept back either by threats or persuasions, crowded to hear his sermons. Some of the lowest class, it is true, instigated by the opponents of the gospel, declared they would throw Farel into a well, but this had no influence on the courageous preacher. He published the truth for several days to increasing multitudes. Surprised at his success, he wrote to his colleagues as follows: "Unite with me in thanking the Father of mercies for so graciously enlightening those who were oppressed with the severest tyranny. God is

my witness, that I did not leave you, with whom I would gladly live and die, in order to escape bearing the cross. The glory of Christ, and the attachment shown to his word by his disciples in this place, enable me to bear great and inexpressible sufferings ; but by the power of Christ, all my burdens are rendered light."

Farel visited Neufchâtel from time to time, for the purpose of confirming the newly planted church; and of preaching the gospel in the neighbourhood. Often did opposition arise ; at Bevay an attack was made on the congregation, and the mob drove the preacher out of the church, reviling and assaulting him. On another occasion, Farel was led into the chapel by the priests, who endeavoured to compel him to fall down before an image of the virgin ; but he stedfastly refused, exclaiming, " Ye ought to worship the only true God, in spirit and in truth, and not a dumb, lifeless, helpless image." They had previously laid violent hands on him, but now, exasperated at his firmness, they beat him still more severely, so that he lost much blood, of which the traces were visible six years after on the walls of the chapel.

In 1531, a civil war broke out in Switzerland, between the five cantons, who still

adhered to the errors of Romanism, and those of Zurich and Berne, who strongly supported the cause of the reformation, when the latter were defeated in their own territories, with the loss of four hundred men. Zwingle, who had accompanied the army of the reformers as their chaplain, was slain. While dying, he was heard to say, "Can this be considered as a calamity? Well! they are able, indeed, to slay the body, but they are not able to kill the soul." His body, found by the Romanists, was burned to ashes.

The outrage on Zwingle's corpse aroused all the anger of Zurich. It rallied its forces, but another reverse ere long augmented the desolation of the reformed party. At two in the morning their antagonists, the Waldstettes, guided by the bright light of the moon, quitted their camp in silence, wearing white shirts over their dresses, that they might recognise one another. Their watchword proclaimed their character, "Mary, the mother of God!"

Stealthily did they glide into a pine forest, near which the reformers were encamped. On they rushed with frightful shouts. Many of them were slain by the armies of Zurich and Berne; but the tide soon turned; the bravest

fell, the rout became general, and eight hundred men were left on the battle-field.

Scarcely had Ferdinand been apprised of Zwingle's death, and of this signal defeat, than he exultingly dispatched the tidings to Charles v., saying, "This is the first of the victories destined to restore the faith." He urged Charles to engage in the work. "Remember," he said, "that you are the first prince in Christendom, and that you will never have a better opportunity of covering yourself with glory. Assist the countries with your troops ; the German sects will perish when they are no longer supported by heretical Switzerland." Charles felt the force of the appeal ; it seemed as if the cause of the reformation were now about to be crushed ; the restoration of Popery immediately commenced in Switzerland, and Rome proved herself everywhere proud, exacting, and ambitious.

"Thus," says D'Aubigné, "the reformation, that had deviated from the right path, was driven back by the very violence of the assault into its primitive course, having no other favour but the word of God. An inconceivable infatuation had taken possession of the friends of the Bible. They had forgotten that our war-

fare is not carnal, and had appealed to arms and to battle. But God reigns ; he punishes the churches and the people that turn aside from his ways.

" We have taken a few stones, and piled them as a monument on the battle-field of Cappel, in order to remind the church of the great lesson which this terrible catastrophe teaches. As we bid farewell, we inscribe on these monumental stones, on the one side, these words from God's book : ' Some trust in chariots, and some in horses : but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. They are brought down and fallen : but we are risen, and stand upright.' And on the other, the declaration of the head of the church . ' My kingdom is not of this world.' If, from the ashes of the martyrs at Cappel, a voice could be heard, it would be in these very words of the Bible that these noble confessors would address, after three centuries, the Christians of our day. That the church has no other king than Jesus Christ ; that she ought not to meddle with the policy of the world, derive from it her inspiration, and call for its swords, its prisons, its treasures ; that she will conquer by the spiritual power which God has deposited in her

bosom, and above all, by the reign of her Head ; that she must not expect upon earth thrones and mortal triumphs ; but that her march resembles that of her King, from the manger to the cross, and from the cross to the crown :— such is the lesson to be read on the old blood-stained page that has crept into our simple and evangelical narrative.” *

* Zwingle’s *Pear Tree* having perished, a rock has been placed over the spot where this illustrious reformer died ; and on it are engraved suitable inscriptions, different, however, from those in the text.—*D’Aubigné*, p. 675.

CHAPTER IV.

Arrival of Calvin in Geneva—Banishment of Calvin, Farel, and Viret—Beza—Recall of Calvin—His writings—“The Interim”—Joys and sorrows of Farel—Death of Calvin—Close of Farel’s labours.

IT was well for Switzerland that all the champions of the truth had not fallen on the field of battle. Among those who were spared to that country were Farel and Viret, who were “always abounding in the work of the Lord;” and ere long they were aided by another advocate of the gospel, of no common intelligence or power.

In the year 1536, Calvin arrived in Geneva. Its location on the shore of the beautiful lake Leman, surrounded by fertile vineyards, high Alps, and glaciers, crowned by the majestic Mont Blanc, would indicate a region of extraordinary interest. But evil mars the fairest abodes of earth, and even the delightful scenery of Geneva, with its pleasing associations, did

not seize upon the mind of Calvin. He says, "I did not wish to spend more than a night there, but Farel, influenced by an incredible zeal for the spread of the gospel, exerted all his power to detain me."

From the time of Calvin's arrival in Geneva, he was united in heart and in labours with Farel and his companion, Viret. They had been some time in French Switzerland, before Calvin came there, and had been assiduous and energetic in the cause of the reformation. Geneva especially had profited by their exertions. In the beginning of Calvin's Commentary on Titus, the following memorial of the connexion that now arose is found: "Since my relation to you (Farel and Viret) so much resembles that of Paul to Titus, I have been led to choose to dedicate this labour to you, in preference to all others. It will afford our contemporaries at least, and it may be those who come after us, some indication of our holy friendship and union. I do not think that two friends have ever lived together in the common relations of life, in so close a friendship as we have enjoyed in our ministry. I have performed the duties of pastor with you both, yet so far were we from the feeling of envy,

that it seemed as if you and myself had been one."

The characters of Calvin and Farel were strikingly dissimilar. Calvin was naturally timid, and gained confidence only by struggling against opposition—Farel knew not fear. Calvin, a scholar, delighting in thought, lived much within himself — Farel rejoiced in practical effort. Calvin was an elegant writer—Farel an eloquent speaker. Farel would face the most violent assault, and confront the most imminent peril—while Calvin preferred retiring before the gathering storm of opposition, to seek out some more excellent way of meeting his antagonists.

Beza says : "Calvin enjoyed exceedingly this hearty friendship, which was as odious to the bad as pleasing to the good ; and truly it was a pleasant sight to see these three extraordinary men, acting with such unanimity, and endowed with so various gifts. Farel was distinguished by a greatness of soul, and no one could listen to the thunder of his words without terror, or hear his most fervent prayers without being exalted, as it were, to heaven. On the contrary, Viret was so winning in speech that his hearers hung upon his lips, whether they

would or not. But Calvin filled the minds of his hearers with as many weighty sentiments as he spake words. Thus, I have often thought, that the union of the gifts of these three men would constitute the most perfect preachers of the gospel."

Beza was at this time somewhat younger than Calvin, and his pupil, but a friendship arose between them not less constant and warm, though of a different cast. Beza was a man of great learning, taste, eloquence, and piety, combined with poetic genius. He was one with Calvin in sentiment and feeling, but was, in some respects, his Melancthon. The enthusiasm with which he devoted himself to him whom he called "Father," could only have arisen from ardent affection.

Immediately Calvin commenced his labours as a minister of the reformation in the consistory. Already Protestantism had spread in Geneva, which had contracted a close alliance with Berne; but its state of morals was very low; and while the talents of Calvin commanded respect, his austerity and sanctity were reprobated or ridiculed. He opposed the re-establishment of superstitious ceremonies and feasts; but as he and his friends, Farel and Viret, were

hated by the Romanists, they were ultimately banished from Geneva. "Well," said they, "it is better to obey God than man!" Calvin, who had discharged his ministerial duties without receiving any remuneration, added, "If I had been the servant of men I should have been ill rewarded; but I rejoiced in serving a Master who never fails to give his servants the recompense that he has promised." "The sufferings occasioned by our own people," Farel remarked, "are indeed painful; but God has a right to impose upon those who are his what cross he pleases, according to his wisdom; and it is our duty to bear willingly whatsoever he sends us."

Grynæus, whom they had informed of their troubles, wrote to them in the following encouraging and conciliatory terms: "It is not your own cause you are maintaining, but that of Christ, the King of kings; he has his eye upon you who are his servants, and observes also Satan, who is raging against you. The power of God's Spirit must be manifested through you, and the craft of Satan must be exposed. However the storm may gather around you, a firm adherence, with a stedfast and confiding heart to the word of God, will be your help and defence. Daily ascend the

pulpit as you have been wont, firmly trusting in the Lord, and speak from the heart in the fulness of faith and love. The Lord liveth. The word of God never manifests its power more mightily than when Satan rages."

Melancholy results arose from the expulsion of these friends of truth. Every social tie was broken ; order and harmony were exchanged for discord, tumult, faction, and deeds of violence. Mass was performed without scruple ; the reading of the Scriptures was restricted, and to females it was totally prohibited. The preachers were utterly regardless of their sacred duties, and even assisted in removing the best qualified teachers of youth from their stations. At length, their safety was endangered, and some of them left the city.

Calvin had predicted that the bitter enemies of the reformation, while imagining they were about to enter a port of safety, were in reality hastening to destruction. The prediction was fulfilled. The syndics, who had pronounced sentence on himself and Farel, met with a dreadful end. One man, of a turbulent and ferocious disposition, was executed as a murderer. Two others, accused of treason, died in prison. Richardet, who had sarcastically told Calvin

that the gates of the city were quite wide enough for him to go out at, found them shut against himself, and broke his neck in trying to escape through a window. These awful events, and the disturbed condition of public affairs, were the means of gradually leading the people to a better state of mind, and excited an earnest desire for the return of their teachers, who, with Christian magnanimity, had never ceased to show a lively interest in the welfare of Geneva.

Meanwhile, Calvin found at Strasburg a pleasant and profitable retreat. His experience and labours while there were an important preparation for his subsequent work. During his abode of between two and three years in that city, in addition to his regular duties as professor of theology, he published his first exegetical works, and a more complete edition of his "Institutes." He cordially forgave his enemies, and zealously exerted himself for the welfare of the church that had spurned him from them. He also became better known to Melancthon, and the other German reformers, and held several important discussions on theological topics. He writes, April 20, 1539 : "When the messenger called for my book, I had twenty sheets to revise, to preach, to read to

the congregation, to write four letters, to attend to some controversies, and to answer more than ten persons who interrupted me for advice." Sturm says: "The French church here increased from day to day. Very many students and learned men came to Strasburg from France, on account of Calvin."

Calvin first saw Melancthon at Frankfort, in the same year. The acquaintance was continued at Worms, where Melancthon was so much fascinated with the learning and spirit of Calvin, that he publicly gave him the name of "The Theologian," which was no unmeaning designation. After these interviews, these two eminent men ever valued each other, notwithstanding some slight differences of opinion. The Wittemberg professor had the highest regard for the opinion of his more sturdy friend, and generally received his fraternal reprimands with meekness. Calvin often expressed his love for Melancthon in his letters to him. In one he says: "Would God that we could confer together. Your candour, ingenuousness, and moderation, are known to me, and of your piety the angels and the whole world are witnesses. It would be no small comfort to me, in the midst of trouble and sorrow, to see

you again, and to embrace you before we die."

Solicited by two councils, and by the ministers and inhabitants of the city to return, Calvin left Strasburg, where he had been appointed professor of theology, and pastor of a French church, and arrived in Geneva, in 1541. He returned alone, Farel being prevented from accompanying him by pressing engagements. He was most joyfully received, and immediately commenced the work of reformation. He assisted in revising the ecclesiastical laws; he altered the existing ordinances; and before the close of the year this useful work was approved by a general council. The laws proved as efficient and salutary as they were wise and equitable.

In the year after Calvin's return the plague visited Geneva. Terror sat upon every face. Almost all shrank from contact with the sick. But Calvin, Blanchet, and Castellio offered to attend on those who were collected in the plague hospital. They cast lots to decide which should take his turn first, and the lot fell on Castellio. He, however, drew back, and Calvin held himself in readiness for the work; but the council and Blanchet would not permit him to

expose himself. Blanchet commenced the work alone, and died in ten months. Another was required to undertake his place, but the council commanded that Calvin should not stand in the lot with others, saying, "The church had need of him."

Calvin now wrote a catechism, which was translated into various languages, and generally approved. He also published a Commentary on the Epistle of Titus. His labours rapidly increased. He preached nearly every day; he lectured on theology very frequently; he presided at meetings, he instructed churches, and defended the doctrines of the reformation in works celebrated for their perspicuity and genius.

He also established in Geneva a seminary for the education of pious young men, who should hereafter labour in the cause of truth, and in so doing he was assisted by the celebrated Beza. The Vaudois, who fled to Geneva from Cabriers and other places, found in him a sincere friend. In public he vindicated their cause, and in private relieved their necessities. Most earnestly did he labour for the conversion of those who were around him. As Charles v., the determined enemy of Protestantism, had

alarmed some by his threats, and corrupted others by his promises, Calvin exerted himself greatly to counteract his efforts. He added, moreover, to the series of his valuable works.

In 1549, Calvin, accompanied by Farel, visited the Swiss churches, and wrote two very able letters to Socinus, the founder of the sect called Socinians. In the following year, he obtained the direction of the consistory at Geneva, for the communication of private, as well as public religious instruction, and for a total disregard of all feast and saint days. Subsequently, controversy again agitated the church ; the enemies of Calvin misrepresented his sentiments, and endeavoured to excite a general antipathy, not only to his person, but his doctrines. But he was graciously defended from evil by the providence of God.

The church of Berne fell into a state of internal dissension, and was at variance respecting the sacrament with the churches of Valois. Such differences were an increasing source of trouble to Farel, and he employed every means in his power to bring about a better state of things. At length, with the assistance of Calvin, he prevailed on the churches at Geneva, Neufchâtel, Schaffhausen, St. Gall,

and Bâsle, to sign an agreement, to which, also, the ministers of Berne gave a verbal assent. Bullinger transmitted the articles of union to England, and, through Calvin and Farel, they were communicated to the friends of the gospel in France, where they occasioned great joy.

A new formulary, called “The Interim,” was obtruded on the Protestants by Charles v. It received its name because it was only to be used until a general council should decide the points at issue between Protestants and Romanists. It was drawn up by three divines, at the order of the emperor, and sent to the pope for his approbation, but this was refused. Charles v., therefore, published the imperial constitute, called “The Interim,” wherein he declared it was his will that all his Catholic dominions should, for the future, inviolably observe the customs, statutes, and ordinances of the universal church; that those who had separated themselves from it should either re-unite themselves to it, or, at least, conform to this constitution; and that all should quietly expect the decisions of the general council.”

This ordinance was published in the diet of Augsburgh, May 15th, 1548; but this device did not please either the pope or the Protestants.

The Lutheran preachers alleged that it re-established Popery, and declared that they would not receive it. Some chose rather to quit their livings and chairs than to subscribe it. It was rejected by the duke of Saxony. Calvin and several others wrote against it.

Farel regarded the Interim as the device of Satan, for the ruin of the church. Alluding to civil governors, he says, in a letter to Bucer : “ Oh, what dreadful depravity ! to abjure that Saviour whom they had acknowledged—to proscribe and expel the precious gospel, and the sacraments they had received ! What fellowship hath Christ with Antichrist, or the gospel of life with the soul-destroying mass, or the sacraments with the infernal superstitions of Popery ? ”

Addressing his friend, he thus continues : “ You and your colleagues are ambassadors of the Most High. The rod of God is intrusted to you for the purpose of ruling the church. A dreadful woe falls upon those who teach anything but the word of God, or practise hypocrisy of any kind. As Christ must always be preached, in order that he alone may reign, so must Anti-christ be held up to abhorrence, that he may find no entrance. How the thought grieves

me ! if they, of whom I could have sworn that they would stand fast in the Lord, in the face of an apostate world—they whom I so highly valued and prized—you who are a father and a pastor, and your colleagues—if these brilliant lights were to become so obscured, as even to enjoin the accursed things that they once abhorred, or, at least, use no opposition to them, undertake nothing against these powers of hell, these legions of devils, but rather favour them ! Lord Jesus ! open their eyes that they may see. Be mindful of thy servants, and of what thou hast already wrought by them." He then offered his thanksgivings to God for strengthening those of his servants who had not yet denied him, and declared that, in the dreadful picture he had presented before them, he had sought only to deter them from that sin, which, in imagination, he had ascribed to them. "For," added he, "shall we, who are redeemed by God's grace from the severe bondage of Antichrist, in which our consciences languished, devoid of faith, and obeying evil doctrines, now voluntarily adore the idol again, and recommend its adoration to others, to their destruction and our own ? How much better would it have been for us had we

never known the way of truth, than thus to return to our former impurity ! ”

The dangers to which the church was exposed, brought on Farel an increasing weight of care. He had also to contend against serious errors with his pen, and a variety of painful events in his own congregation pressed heavily upon him. It was not surprising, therefore, that his health should suffer seriously again and again. The Lord, however, raised him up, that he might labour for a time in his service.

Nothing gave Farel greater delight than to witness the progress of the truth. He rejoiced when it gained the ascendancy in Orbe, where he had scattered the first seed, and had afterwards watered the crop in its advance to maturity. The fate of the people of Locarne, who were exiled for their attachment to the gospel, affected him deeply, and he made a collection on their account at Neufchâtel. “ Oh ye happy ones,” he exclaimed, “ to whom it is given to prefer the gospel to every temporal blessing ! It is delightful to the friends of Christ to hear how fathers are willing to forsake their sons, on account of the word of God ; how sons love Christ more than their

parents ; and how even young females cannot be restrained either by their parents, brothers, or tenderly beloved sisters, from choosing the gospel. What heart is so hard as not to be softened by this holy spectacle ! It would be almost incredible, that the stony and cruel-hearted individuals who thirst for blood, should not at last be brought to feel otherwise !”

He was gratified beyond measure with the flourishing state to which the church at Geneva had attained, through the grace of God, after so many perils and relapses. It was now admired, and considered by pious foreigners as a model of the Christian life.* Calvin had shown his affection for the Genevese by his labours and sufferings, and of its ardour and devotedness they were deeply sensible. Not only did they treat him in his visits with every mark of attention, but the senate brought forward a proposal to retain him in Geneva, with an honourable stipend, that no one might

* Knox, on his visit to Geneva, thus wrote to a friend : “ In my heart I could have wished, yea, and cannot cease to wish, that it might please God to guide and conduct you to this place, where I neither fear nor ashame to say, is the most perfect school of Christ that ever was on the earth since the days of the apostles. In other places, I confess Christ to be truly preached ; but manners and religion so sincerely reformed, I have not yet seen in any other place beside.”

have cause to charge that people with ingratitude.

Meanwhile, Calvin was indefatigable in rooting up the heresies which disturbed the peace of the church, and in comforting the sufferers for conscience' sake, both in England and France. He was also engaged in writing his Commentaries on the Psalms, and the Gospel of John. He proposed the establishment of a college at Geneva for the education of youth ; in three years, his wishes were accomplished, and he was elected to the situation of professor of divinity, jointly with Claudio Pontus. This college afterwards became eminently useful, and was much distinguished for the piety and learning of the men who went forth from it.

In 1561, Calvin was summoned before the council of Geneva, at the desire of Charles IX., as being an enemy to France and her king. But the only charge that could be established against him, was his having sent Protestant missionaries to that kingdom. Soon after, he greatly interested himself on behalf of the Protestants of that country, who were persecuted by the duke of Guise. He still continued his lectures, and pursued his literary labours. In

the year 1564, he became gradually worse, but yet insisted on performing as many of his duties as his state of health would possibly allow. On the 27th of March, he was carried into the council, and delivered before the seigneurs who were assembled his farewell discourse. To the syndics, in the ensuing month, he addressed an able and affecting oration ; and to the ministers of the town and country, assembled in his room, he made an admirable and pathetic appeal. This was his last public labour. Acts of devotion occupied the remainder of his life. He died May 24th, at the age of fifty-four.

According to Beza, the whole city was filled with lamentation for this event for a day and a night. "The state," says he, "sought in vain its wisest citizen, the church deplored the decease of its faithful pastor, the school wept the loss of such a teacher ; all, in fine, lamented, as deprived of a common parent and consoler." Nor, when we rightly appreciate the services rendered by Calvin to Geneva, can such lamentation be regarded as excessive.

And yet no man has been the object of more frequent and grossly slanderous imputations than he. The Romanist and the Protestant,

the sceptic and the believer, have alike assailed him with violent accusation and reproach. But, assuredly, in so doing they were utterly in ignorance of his true character, and of the various products of his talents, or else they regarded them through the dense mists of inveterate prejudice.

As a theologian and expositor of Scripture, Calvin stands in the foremost rank of such men in any age or country. As a civilian, though the law was the subject of subordinate attention, he had few equals among his contemporaries. Throughout a period, singularly trying and hazardous, he displayed a combination of wisdom in counsel, prudence in zeal, decision and intrepidity, which might well have excited a profound admiration. In his character were united the noble qualities which awaken reverence, and the lovely dispositions which attract affection. If, in any respects, he was harsh and severe, the qualities thus indicated were needed in the times in which his lot was cast. Fidelity to the cause of God and truth often assumes these aspects ; though, doubtless, Calvin was not without his faults and errors. He had to take his position, on the one hand, against the intriguing Charles, and, on the other, against

the courtly and bigoted Francis. His most powerful weapon was his pen, and this his royal antagonists could neither restrict nor repel. His works remain to receive the due meed of all who will fairly examine them, and to refute the calumnies of his bitter and virulent enemies. Among them his "Institutes" occupy a distinguished place, not only as demonstrating the highest ability and extensive knowledge, but also as a work which greatly aided the progress of the reformation.

Scarcely any event affected Farel so deeply as the loss of Calvin. He had, however, many trials to endure; but his end was rapidly approaching. He proceeded to Metz, where he delivered a powerful discourse, but the exertion was too much for his debilitated frame; his strength was gone, and he was obliged to take to his bed. He was visited by people of all ranks. He exhorted, encouraged, and comforted them, according to their respective circumstances. Amazed at his fortitude, they said one to another, "See, this man is the very same that he always has been! We never knew him dejected, even when danger made our spirits fail. When we were ready to give up everything, he remained stedfast, confiding

in his Lord, and cheering us by his Christian heroism!" He gently fell asleep, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, on the 13th of September, 1565. His decease was deeply and widely lamented. One of his biographers remarks, that "without lessening the praise and commendation due to any one, Farel, in reference to his anxiety, toil, and exertions in the work of the reformation and the ministerial office, and his entire self-consecration, stood in the very first rank."

As a preacher, he unquestionably gained a high position for effect and usefulness. Men of all ranks and classes, from the senator to the peasant, confessed the power of his eloquence. Strangers of distinction went from a great distance to hear him preach. Animated, ardent, Scriptural, and practical—making powerful appeals to the heart, or probing it by various and searching inquiries, mingled with prayer to God—he carried his auditory away as with a torrent.

On one occasion, expressing his abhorrence of those who forbade the use of the Holy Scriptures, he exclaimed, "My God, what an abomination! Canst thou, O sun, shed thy beams on such a country? Canst thou, O earth,

bear such people upon thee, and yield thy fruits to those who thus despise their Creator? And thou, O God, art thou so compassionate, so slow to wrath and vengeance against those who commit such great wickedness and sin against thee? Hast thou not appointed thy Son king over all? Shall that holy revelation which thou hast imparted through him for our instruction be forbidden as a useless, and even dangerous document to those who read it? Arise, O Lord! Show that it is thy will that thy Son should be honoured, and the sacred statutes of his kingdom should be known and observed by all. Let the trumpet of thy holy gospel sound throughout the world. Grant strength to all true evangelists, and destroy all the propagators of error, that the whole earth may serve thee, and call on thy name with the profoundest adoration."

In his last production, he argued very warmly against the adoration of the cross, though it was urged, as it is to this day, not only by Romanists, but by those who imitate their practices, that the people do not adore the cross, but celebrate through its medium the benefits arising from the Lord's death upon it. He admitted that such an elevation of mind was

possible with a few individuals, but contended that, as the great mass of the people never rise beyond externals, that which is external, and is not commanded by Christ, should be put away. His recollections of his own acts of adoration, in early life, filled him with penitential sorrow ; and the more deeply such superstitions had once been rooted in his mind, the more was he impelled in his old age to write against them, in order that all infected with the same poison might be cured as he had been. Owing to the propensity of mankind to be enthralled by the objects of sense, he looked upon the use of images, even when not professedly worshipped, as always a great temptation to idolatry.

In the same work, he showed that the Holy Scriptures were the only rule of Christian faith and practice, and proved that the addition of ceremonies and external splendour operated to diminish the glory of the gospel, and to obscure the radiance of the great Sun of righteousness. He thus concludes : “ Let us beseech our blessed Lord, that he would form out of all a pure and holy church, free from all the filth of Popery, and from all human traditions, so that Jesus and his commands should alone be honoured, in all purity and simplicity, so that

we may live in him without spot, and he in us, by true faith, serving God our Father, who ever liveth and reigneth with the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen ! ”

The existing memorials of this truly eminent and useful man are graphically described by Dr. W. L. Alexander. Alluding to Neufchâtel, he says : “ The most interesting spot in the town to me was the old castle, gloomy and black as it is, with the church adjoining. Both are memorable edifices in connexion with the history of the reformation. In the former reigned, at that time, the gay and haughty Joanne de Longueville, by whose sanction and authority the most vigorous attempts were made to beat back the tide which, under the guidance of the energetic Farel, was fast rising and advancing to sweep away the power of Popery in this canton ; and in the latter were held those memorable conferences, and were delivered those fervid harangues, which ended in the entire subversion of the papal influence in Neufchâtel. What a pair to meet on that narrow terrace in fierce conflict — the representative of the high-born and haughty heiress of the princely house of Châlons, and the poor, homeless, uncourtly, fiery preacher, who had penetrated her domain ! ”

Ha ! how it would have startled that proud lady, amid her seignorial dignities and feudal majesty, with her princely revenues, her hosts of armed retainers, and her crowds of abject vassals—not daring to keep or to change their faith save at her august bidding—had some one, gifted to glance into futurity, whispered in her ear, that not only should she be utterly worsted in that impending conflict, but that it would be to it she should owe her place in history—nay, that it should be from her relations with that obscure adventurer, that the proud race of the De Longuevilles should be chiefly indebted for being remembered in after ages by any of the human species, besides compilers of peerages, and members of heralds' colleges !

“ On the terrace before the church Farel lies buried, but his grave is not now to be distinguished. It matters not ; enough for that o'erworked and o'erwearied body, that here it found rest ; and as for the fervid spirit that animated it, *its* record is on high.

“ Who that is interested in the memory of Farel can visit Neufchâtel without hastening to the little village of Serriere ? This memorable spot, where the reformer landed, and where

he was permitted first to lift up his voice in proclamation of the gospel on this side the lake, is about a mile distant from Neufchâtel, a little to the left of the Geneva road. It is altogether a remarkable place. A stream, issuing suddenly from an opening in the mountain, rushes through a brief course of not more than half a mile down a narrow glen, over which the road passes by a bridge. The sides of the glen are studded with mills, the wheels of which are turned by the stream, which thus renders itself for its length perhaps the most diligent and useful little stream in the world. At the bottom of the glen where it opens upon the lake clusters the village of Serriere, with its ancient church. On a stone near this church, Farel stood when he preached his first sermon in the canton of Neufchâtel—a stone of compromise on the part of the perplexed Emer Beynon, vicar of the parish, who, not hostile to Farel, would fain have him preach, but, fearful for Emer Beynon; dared not to open for him the doors of the church. It is a plain, rough stone, in nowise noticeable save for this, that, during the space of an hour or so, it was the throne of a king of men, where he uttered those words which laid the foundation of that spiritual

empire which God had given him to establish. It is worthy of remark, also, that from this little hamlet issued the first Protestant edition of the French Scriptures—that curious, coarse paper, little folio of 1535, which all bibliomaniacs are crazy to possess, but which very few have so much as seen.”*

And in concluding this chapter, it may be stated, that in the cloisters behind the cathedral of Bâsle many of the eminent men in former days lie interred. Here Erasmus was accustomed to walk and meditate, or to converse in varied strains with his friends. Here, too, Œcolampadius delighted to study ; and near to the minster is the house in which he dwelt, and where the dismissal of his spirit took place. The night had come, and, as it was rumoured that he should not live till morning, the ministers of Bâsle hastened to the side of his couch. On a former occasion, he had delivered to them his dying charge, and now his words were few. On one asking him if the light of the lamp did not annoy him, he laid his hand on his heart, and exclaimed, “Here—here is where I have enough of light.” As the day dawned, he chanted in a feeble voice the 57th Psalm, and then, heaving

* Switzerland, pp. 27—29.

a sigh, said, "Lord Jesus, come to my help!" These were his last words. The sun shone brightly on that corpse, surrounded by weeping friends, but in the experience of his happy spirit the great Intercessor's prayer was answered, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am : that they may behold my glory!"

CHAPTER V.

The Reformation in England—Henry VIII. writes against Luther—Tyndale's New Testament—Henry's controversy with the pope—Persecution.

THE disciples and followers of Wycliffe, called Lollards, survived the persecutions in which many were martyrs, and we discover them in the time of Henry VIII. That monarch assailed the doctrines of the monk of Wittemberg. Luther wrote to Lange, on the 26th of June, 1522: "They brag greatly of a little book by the king of England."

The sovereign, too, was elated with his work. He directed his ambassador at the papal court to lay his book before the pontiff, and it was done with the declaration, "The king, my master, gives you the assurance, that having refuted Luther's errors with the pen, he is ready to combat his adherents with the sword." Leo, gratified by the promise, replied, that the book could only have been composed by the

aid of the Holy Ghost, and styled Henry, "Defender of the Faith"—an appellation still borne by the sovereigns of England. Luther, on the other hand, regarded Henry's book with contempt and indignation.

In his reply, he reproaches Henry with resting his doctrine only on human decrees and opinions. "As for me," he says, "I cease not to cry, 'The gospel ! the gospel ! Christ ! Christ !' and my adversaries as incessantly reply, 'Usages ! usages ! Ordinances ! ordinances ! Fathers ! fathers !' 'Let your faith,' says St. Paul, 'be founded not on man's wisdom, but on the power of God ;' and the apostle, with this thunder-stroke from heaven, overthrows and scatters all the will-o'-the-wisps of this Henry, as the wind scatters the light dust. Confounded and dismayed, the Thomists, the Papists, and the Henrys, fall prostrate before the thunder of these words." Defended by Fisher, bishop of Rochester, and sir Thomas More, his future chancellor, and not a little perplexed and confounded by the manner in which he was treated by Luther, in the face of Europe, Henry did not resume his pen.

He, however, and his favourite Wolsey, alike exasperated against Luther, whose person

was beyond their reach, did not fail to display their rage against his works. The cardinal, as legate from the pope, issued a mandate, commanding all persons who had any books written by "that pestilent heretic, Martin Luther," to deliver them to their ordinaries within fifteen days, under pain of being reputed and treated as heretics. He also ordered a paper to be affixed to the door of every church, containing forty-two propositions, extracted from the works of Luther, which had been condemned by the pope as "damnable heresies." These measures, however, so far from preventing Luther's works being imported or translated, only made the people more eager to peruse them.

That many were called to suffer for what was deemed heresy, we know from the popish ecclesiastics of that day, from whom our own historians have drawn largely in their works. Among these, "The Acts and Monuments of the Church," by John Foxe, hold a distinguished place. He tells us, in the preface to the later editions of that work, that "no English Papist almost in the realm thought himself a perfect Catholic, unless he had cast out some word or other to give that book a blow;" and others have assailed it with effrontery and virulence.

But, as Wordsworth says, “These writings have not proved, and it never will be proved, that John Foxe is not one of the most faithful and accurate of historians. We know too much of the strength of Foxe’s book, and the weakness of those of his adversaries, to be further moved by such censures than to charge them with falsehood. All the many researches and discoveries of later times, in regard to historical documents, have only contributed to place the general fidelity and truth of Foxe’s melancholy narrative on a rock which cannot be shaken.”*

In the course of the reign of Henry, the state of ecclesiastical affairs was greatly altered. To accomplish his own purposes, he renounced his subjection to the pope, broke off his connexion with the Romish court, and assailed it with the utmost virulence. Assuming the title of head of the English church, he not only persecuted even to death the Romanists who denied his supremacy, but the Protestants who did not admit most of the papal errors. He even sent the persecutors and their victims on the same sledge to the same place of execution. Execrable as his conduct was, we may mark, however, the providence of that God who brings good out

* Ecclesiastical Biography, xix. xx.

of evil. Assuredly, when Papists denounce the reformation on his account, they wilfully forget that the popes who were his contemporaries, not merely equalled but exceeded him in the worst features of his conduct. While one of their own historians, Guicciardini, calls pope Clement, who pronounced sentence of excommunication on Henry, “a good pope,” he adds, “I mean not goodness apostolical, for in those days he was esteemed a good pope that did not exceed the worst of men in wickedness.”

A man according to God’s own heart had now arisen in a district of England, which, “above all others, had fallen under the power of Italy, or, like a ripe fig, into the mouth of the eater.” Among the picturesque beauties of Gloucestershire, where the prospects pointed out by the topographer amount to nearly forty in number, there is one from the top of Stinchcomb Hill, fifteen miles south-west of the city, which commands the Severn from Gloucester to Bristol, having the vale of Berkeley, with its venerable castle on the left bank of that river, and the Forest of Dean, Chepstow, and the Welsh mountains on the right. From this point more than seven counties are visible, and about thirty parish churches ; but to every

admirer of England's best hope, her Sacred Volume, the spot acquires by far its deepest interest, from his having immediately below his eye the birthplace of its original translator. There can be no question that William Tyndale was born in the hundred of Berkeley, whether at the village of Stinchcomb itself, or more probably at North Nibley, two miles to the left, now also full in view. His family, however, stands long in connexion with *both* villages.*

Tyndale was brought up from his earliest years at Oxford. Of him, Foxe has said : "By long continuance, he grew up and increased as well in the knowledge of tongues, and other liberal arts, as especially in the knowledge of the Scriptures ; inasmuch, that he read privily to certain students and fellows in Magdalen College some parcel of divinity, instructing them in the knowledge and truth of the Scriptures."

Returning to his native county, Tyndale resided for about two years as tutor, in Little Sodbury Manor-house. On the edge of Sodbury hill is a strong Roman camp, of an oblong square, where first queen Margaret, and then

* Anderson's Annals, vol. i. p. 16.

Edward IV. in pursuit, had rested before the battle of Tewkesbury. Immediately below this camp, on the side of the hill fronting southward, stands the Manor-house, an ancient building, from which there is a beautiful and extensive prospect over the vale, as far as the Bristol Channel. It was now in possession of sir John Walsh, knight. Four clumps of large trees growing above, objects very observable, are taken notice of through a large extent of country on that side of the hills.*

With the guests that resorted hither, "abbots, deans, archdeacons, with divers other doctors, and great beneficed men," Tyndale freely conversed ; and often did he place before them the testimony of Scripture, to confute their errors, and to confirm his own statements. At the same time he was busy with his "Christian Soldier's Manual," which, on being finished, he presented to sir John and his lady. "After they had read and well perused the same," says Foxe, "the doctorly prelates were no more so often invited to the house, neither had they the cheer and countenance when they came which before they had."

It was soon evident that Tyndale could no

* Anderson's Annals, p. 30.

longer remain with safety in the county of Gloucester, or within the diocese of Worcester. He, therefore, repaired to London, but no ecclesiastic afforded him any permanent abode. He had already said to one reputed as a learned divine, "If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough to know more of the Scriptures than you do!" And now his residence in the metropolis had a similar effect upon him which a visit to Rome had upon others, and tended not only to ground him more firmly in his views of Divine truth, but to inflame his zeal for translating the Scriptures. "I understood at the last," he says, "not only that there was no room in my lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, but also, that there was no place to do it in all England, as experience doth now openly declare."* Tyndale now left his country, repairing first to Hamburgh, and speedily entered on the accomplishment of his design.

He afterwards proceeded to Cologne, but here difficulties arose, and he now found refuge in the city of Worms. Here his small octavo New Testament, the fruitful parent of so many editions, was printed ; only one perfect copy of

* Preface to the Pentateuch.

the text remains ; it is preserved at Bristol, a city in which Tyndale used to preach. Another edition was printed at Worms, by the close of the year, 1525 ; both, it is believed, by Peter Schoeffer, son of the associate of Guttenberg and Fust.

In 1526, Tonstal, the bishop of London, issued a special prohibition against several books, but particularly against the New Testament in English. He asserted, that they contained "pestiferous and most pernicious poison," and were dispersed through his diocese, "to the peril of souls, and the offence of God's divine majesty." These books were chiefly written by Tyndale, Joyce, and some other persons, who, driven from England, then resided at Antwerp, and were actively engaged in writing and printing works against the corruptions of the church of Rome.

Intent on accomplishing his design, Tonstal consulted Packington, a London merchant who traded to Antwerp, how he might gain possession of Tyndale's Testaments, in order that they might be burned. Packington, it is said, was a secret friend of Tyndale's, and knowing his want of money, and there being many of his Testaments on hand, he told the bishop, that if

he pleased he would endeavour to purchase all that remained unsold. To this the bishop consented ; the books were obtained, and on their arrival in England were burned in Cheapside.

The demand, however, naturally increased the supply ; and the next year, greater numbers arrived than before. Packington was charged by the bishop with having failed in his engagement ; but he asserted that this was not the case. "He believed," he said, "that the people at Antwerp had printed more since, and that he really did not see how this was to be stopped, unless his lordship would also buy the types and presses !"

Tyndale has been accused of defrauding Tonstal on this occasion ; but he was perfectly innocent of the charge. The editions of the New Testament, with which England was thus supplied, were printed by the booksellers in Holland, as a matter of gain, and without any reference to Tyndale. The bishop had all he bargained for—Tyndale's unsold copies ; nor did the reformer print another edition till several years after. During the interval, he was engaged in translating the Old Testament, and writing various religious works.

Those who imported or purchased the New

Testament were, meanwhile, prosecuted with great severity. John Tyndale, the brother of the translator, was punished for “ sending five marks to his brother, and receiving letters from him ;” and was condemned to do penance with Thomas Patmore, another merchant of London, by riding to the Standard in Cheapside with their faces to their horses’ tails, having the Testaments hung thickly round them, fastened to their gowns ; and they were then compelled to cast the books into the fire, expressly kindled to consume them. To reduce them to beggary, and to keep them in prison, they were also condemned to pay the enormous fine of £18,000 — equal in the present day to £200,000.

Bilney, early distinguished as a scholar, visited meanwhile many parts of the country, boldly reproving the errors of the Romish church. In one of his letters, he says : “ O mighty power of the Most High, which I, miserable sinner, have often felt ! I who, before I came unto Christ, had also spent all that I had on these ignorant physicians, so that there was small strength left in me, little money, and less understanding, for they had appointed me to perform watchings and fastings, and had

directed me to purchase pardons * and masses ; in all of which, as I now plainly perceive, they sought rather their own gain than the salvation of any sick and languishing soul.

"But at length I heard of Jesus. It was when Erasmus had first published his edition of the New Testament in Latin ; which, when I understood to be done by him in most elegant Latinity, I was induced for the sake of the language to purchase the book, being at that time entirely ignorant of its contents ; but I bought it, as I now perceive, by the especial providence of God. I well remember the first time I read it, for I happened to turn to the First Epistle of Paul to Timothy, and there found that sentence, (and it was a most sweet and comfortable sentence to my soul,) 'It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.' This one sentence, through the power of God working on my heart, in a manner at that time unknown to me, rejoiced my soul, then deeply wounded by a sight and sense of my sins, and almost in the depths of despair, so that I felt an inward comfort and quietness which I cannot

* Or, indulgences.

describe, but it caused my broken heart to rejoice."

Such was the language in which Bilney addressed Tonstal; and yet, says Latimer, "he was persuaded by his friends to bear a fagot, (the sign of recantation,) at the time the cardinal was in full power." But in this state he did not continue. For Latimer adds : "Now when he came to Cambridge again, for a whole year after he was in such anguish and agony, that nothing did him good, not even the communication of God's word, for he thought that all the Scriptures were against him, and sounded to his condemnation. I communed with him many times, for I was well acquainted with him ; but all things that any one could bring forward for his comfort seemed to him to make against him. Yet for all that, God afterwards endued him with such strength and perfectness of faith, that he not only confessed his faith in the gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ, but also suffered his body to be burned for that same gospel's sake, which we now preach in England."

Latimer furnishes proof of the assertion already made, that the minds of men in different countries were enlightened as to the

same great truths, while at a distance from each other, by the Holy Spirit. For the bishop of Ely, approving a sermon he heard of Latimer's, required him to preach against Luther and his doctrines ; but Latimer replied, " My lord, I am not acquainted with the doctrines of Luther, nor are we permitted here to read his works. How, then, can I refute his doctrine, without fully understanding what opinions he holdeth ? Sure I am, that I have preached before you this day no man's doctrine, but only the doctrine of God, out of the Scriptures ; and if Luther does no more than this, there is no need to confute his doctrines ; but when I understand that he doth teach against the Scriptures, I will be ready, with all my heart, to preach against his doctrine as well as I am able."

Early in the year 1532, Latimer was cited to appear before archbishop Warham, on account of his doctrines ; but the bishop, probably owing to the king's protection, did not push matters against him to the utmost. There were, however, others who suffered severely for Christ's sake. Warham was a bitter persecutor of the Lollards, and was very credulous on all points wherein he supposed the interests of Rome to be concerned.

On his death, the king chose Cranmer as his successor, and sent to the pope for the usual bulls or decrees. The pope could not be pleased at the appointment of a man already known to oppose his authority, and who had been in familiar intercourse with many of the German reformers ; but as his connexion with England was critical, he dared not display his repugnance.

As Henry had already determined on obtaining a divorce from his queen Catharine, in order to marry Anne Boleyn, and that against the consent of the pope, the next step was to declare England's independence of the Romish see. It had hitherto exacted yearly large sums of money from England. The annates, or first fruits, for instance, were originally paid by the clergy, to assist in defending Christendom against infidelity, but were afterwards collected by the pope himself. No less than eight hundred thousand ducats had been remitted to Rome on this account only, since the beginning of the preceding reign, a sum nearly equal to three millions of our money. Not to enumerate other demands, “Peter-pence,” a penny paid for every chimney, amounted, at a low estimate, to £7,500 per annum, fully equal to £70,000

in our days. But, in the year 1532, the annates, or first fruits, were transferred to the king; and to put down the power of the pope, his name was struck out of the books used in the church service, and various other measures were taken. Still many were the efforts of his adherents, and opinions deemed heretical were visited with suffering and death.

As soon as Cranmer was promoted to the see of Canterbury, he was concerned to have the Bible printed in the English language. But the popish prelates were opposed to the work. They urged that all the troubles and extravagant opinions of the Anabaptists in Germany, and that all the blasphemies held by some Hollanders, who were burned in the preceding year, arose alike from “the indiscreet use of the Scriptures.” They displayed, in fact, the same spirit which was cherished by their fathers, and which is as manifest in our own day as it was in theirs.

Meanwhile, Coverdale published an edition, most probably printed at Zurich, and dedicated to Henry. In a ms. Manual of Devotion, given by queen Anne Boleyn to her maids of honour, there is a petition in reference to this work: “Grant us, most merciful Father, this

one of the greatest gifts thou ever gavest to mankind, the knowledge of thy holy will, and the glad tidings of our salvation ; this grant, while oppressed with the tyranny of thy adversary of Rome, and kept close under his Latin letters, (the Latin Bible,) and now at length promulgated, published, and set at liberty by the grace poured into the heart of our prince.” It would thus seem that Henry favoured Coverdale’s work ; but scarcely had it left the press, when queen Anne was beheaded on the charge of infidelity to the king. Romanists have laboured to blacken her memory ; no wonder, when she was generally esteemed as a favourer of the so-called “ new doctrine ;” but certainly her guilt has never been proved. According to Spelman, the only shadow of evidence against her was “ the alleged oath of a woman that was dead.” The lord-mayor of London, officially required to be present at her trial, openly declared his opinion that the evidence on which she was accused was utterly insufficient. Queen Anne asserted her innocence in a letter to the king, and maintained it to her latest breath. But the strongest proof of it is, that Henry married Jane Seymour the day after Anne perished on the scaffold.

In the year 1534, Tyndale published at Antwerp a new and more correct edition of the New Testament, and was proceeding with a translation of the whole Bible ; but he was betrayed into the hands of the emperor's officers, and was confined for nearly two years in the castle of Vilvorde. The English merchants exerted themselves for his relief ; but, after several examinations, Tyndale was condemned as a heretic, and sentenced to die. When fastened to the stake, he loudly exclaimed, "Lord, open the king of England's eyes!" He was first strangled, and then burned.

Great are our obligations to this martyr for the truth's sake. "It must never be forgotten," says Anderson,* "that in one sense Tyndale's prose has been read in Britain ever since, and that, too, 'every Sabbath-day ;' for, notwithstanding all the confessed improvements made on our translation of the Bible, large portions in almost every chapter still remain verbally the same as he first gave them to his country. In this, it is true, he was merely a translator, but then the *style* of his translation has stood the test of nearly ten generations. It has been their

* Annals, vol. i. p. 245.

admiration all along, and it will continue to be admired while the language endures."

The king was now actively engaged in suppressing the lesser monasteries and abbeys, whose respective revenues did not exceed £200 per annum. These establishments, amounting in number to three hundred and seventy-six, were suppressed by an act passed in April, 1536, on account of the wicked lives of their inmates, a full report of which was made to parliament. In the reign of Mary, commissioners were appointed to examine documents, and many of importance were then destroyed. As Burnet says, "Lest they should have been afterwards confessors, it was resolved that they should then be martyrs." But of this report a few fragments remain.

In many places, the monks, alarmed at the idea of investigation, surrendered all their possessions to the king, without waiting the arrival of the commissioners. In 1540, an act was passed, by which 645 convents, 90 colleges, 2,374 chantries and free chapels, and 110 hospitals, with their possessions, were annexed to the crown. The yearly rent of their lands was estimated at £160,000, but in reality it very far exceeded that sum. The shrine or

Thomas à Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, in the reign of Henry II., whose hasty expressions induced four of the courtiers to that monarch to kill the prelate, who was soon after canonized by the pope, yielded gold which filled two large chests, each of them as heavy as eight strong men could carry. The plate, gold and silver images, and other things belonging to these establishments, exceeded all computation. Other property was, however, concealed and embezzled by the monks. The greater part of their wealth the monks and friars had obtained from persons on the bed of death, even to their leaving their families in poverty, on the persuasion that, by so doing, their souls might be prayed out of purgatory. Erasmus, himself at that time a Romanist, has described the manner in which these persons encouraged men in vice while alive, and beset their death-beds, often contending among themselves, even to blows, to obtain preference for their own orders in the bequests.

Insurrections arose from this suppression of the monasteries. Several priests and monks engaged in open rebellion, and inflamed the people by the grossest absurdities. The most formidable rising was in Yorkshire; it was

called, "The Pilgrimage of Grace," and the number of rebels amounted to 40,000. They took possession of York and Hull, and advanced to Doncaster, having many crucifixes and banners, with holy emblems, carried before them. An armed force was sent against the rebels, but an extraordinary flood prevented the armies from attacking each other; it gave also an opportunity for negotiation, and the rebels were induced to disperse on promise of pardon. Some lesser insurrections were soon quelled; but many who had been most active were tried, condemned, and executed.

Cranmer had now completed his translation of the Bible. Persons were employed to print it in Paris, that city affording many facilities for such a work, and permission being obtained from the French king. But this was soon recalled at the instance of the clergy; and, by an order of the inquisition, the sheets already printed were seized, and the printers charged with heresy. The English who superintended the printing were, however, allowed to retire to London with their types and presses, and the work was, at length, completed.

The king commanded that a copy of the Bible, in English, should be purchased at the

joint expense of the clergyman and inhabitants of every parish, to be placed in every church, that it might be read by all who pleased. A second proclamation was issued in consequence of the neglect of some parishes. The public reading of the Scriptures was permitted in the year 1537 ; but persons were not allowed to purchase the English Bible for their own use, and that of their families, for two years afterwards.

The pope now determined to employ strong measures against the monarch, who had cast off his supremacy, suppressed the monasteries, and sanctioned the translation of the Scriptures. Henry was, therefore, denounced as the most infamous tyrant that ever existed. Three years before, the pope had pronounced sentence against him, but it was not published ; probably from the hope that, as the emperor and the king of France had become reconciled, they might be induced to join in making war against Henry. This document stated various grounds of accusation ; he was next summoned to appear at Rome within ninety days, to give an account of his actions, and on his failing to do so, his crown was declared to be forfeited, while the kingdom was to be placed under an

interdict, forbidding the celebration of Divine worship, and the rites and ceremonies of the church. These penalties were extended to all the accomplices and adherents of the king, and “all his and their children, either born, or that may afterwards be born.”

Nor was this all: the subjects of the king were absolved from their allegiance, and all persons prohibited from any trade or intercourse with him and his people, under pain of excommunication. It was declared that any articles of provision or merchandize so traded in might be lawfully seized, and become the property of any one who took them. All priests, bishops, and other ecclesiastics, were ordered to quit the kingdom within five days of the expiration of the time already mentioned, leaving only a few to baptize infants, and to administer the sacrament to such as were about to die in a penitent state of mind. It was only possible to go one step further, and that was taken; the pope required all the nobles, clergy, and individuals of every rank, without delay or excuse, to rise up in arms, with their followers, against their monarch, and drive him from his kingdom; while other kings, princes, and people, were forbidden to assist or countenance

him, either directly or indirectly, under pains and penalties. At the same time, "Christian princes" were exhorted, "by the mercies of God," to join in attacking Henry; they were permitted to make prize of any property belonging to him and his subjects, and to apply it to their own use; while it was decreed that the subjects of Henry should be the *slaves* of any who should seize them. The bull concluded by declaring that "if any person should attempt to oppose this decree, they would incur the indignation of the omnipotent God, and St. Peter and St. Paul, his apostles!"

Such a sentence had driven king John and other European sovereigns from their thrones; but Henry was proof against its power. He took measures to confirm his authority, and a declaration against the pope was signed by the ecclesiastics of the realm. Another, subscribed by all the bishops and twenty-five eminent doctors of divinity and law, says, "That the people ought to be instructed, that Christ expressly forbade his apostles, or their successors, to take to themselves the power of the sword, or the authority of kings; and that if the bishop of Rome, or any other bishop, assumed any such power, he was a tyrant and usurper

of other men's rights, and a subverter of the kingdom of Christ."

It was, however, unhappily evident that Henry had not departed from the errors of the church of Rome ; but remained a Papist, notwithstanding all that had occurred, both in principle and practice. There were still sufferers and martyrs for the truth, among whom was Lambert, who from the flames cried out to the people, "None but Christ ! none but Christ !" Henry saw his kingdom offered to other monarchs, who he knew were willing to invade England, as in the days of John, could they raise a sufficient force ; while many of his subjects had shown themselves ready to engage in rebellion against him. He therefore determined to evince his regard for the Romish faith and its ceremonies by a law, partly drawn up by himself, which enforced the principal errors of Popery. It was boldly opposed by Cranmer and others, but received the sanction of parliament. The penalties of this law, often called "the bloody act," and, from its having six articles, "the whip with six thongs," were most severe. It was enacted, that any persons who should, by word, writing, printing, or otherwise, publish, teach, preach, say, or give,

or hold any opinion that the body and blood of Christ were not both in the bread and the wine, or should by any means contemn or despise the sacrament, they, and all who aided, abetted, and comforted them, should be deemed heretics, and burned, without being allowed to escape if they abjured, and all their property should be forfeited to the king. Other penalties were no less sanguinary. This act gave great pleasure to all who favoured Popery ; but the Lollards, and all who were attached to Divine truth, were much cast down.

Many of them fled for safety to the continent. Shaxton and Latimer resigned their bishoprics, and were committed to prison. Commissioners were appointed to carry the act into effect throughout the kingdom. Those who sat in London, in the course of fourteen days, committed five hundred persons to prison, who were accused of violating the law. Several of the companies' halls were used as places of confinement, from the prisons being unequal to contain this number in addition to their other occupants. So great was the consternation of the people, and their opposition to the new law, that the lord chancellor Audley, accompanied by Cranmer, Cromwell, and the duke of Suf-

folk, had an audience of the king, and represented the fatal effects that would arise from its continued operation in such strong terms, that he commanded the prisoners in London to be liberated. The proceedings of the commissioners were also checked in other parts of the kingdom, and while Cromwell remained in office this cruel law was not much enforced.

It was not long before the Romish party procured the death of Cromwell, and they next endeavoured to effect the destruction of Cranmer. He had recently obtained a most important privilege—the free use of the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue, in private families as well as in the churches. But though there were many victims to the dominant power, he was preserved to render other services to his own and succeeding generations. Thus he laboured assiduously to continue to the people the use of the Scriptures. He appeared, too, to have been the principal promoter of the change, by which occasional prayers were introduced into the public services of the church more frequently than in former times, and in the English language. He, moreover, succeeded in persuading the king again to prohibit some

of the most superstitious ceremonies of the Romish church.

His exertions in favour of the truth excited great enmity against him, and some engaged in a plot in which they were detected. The chief conspirators were committed to prison ; but were released after some months' confinement, from the intercession of Cranmer in their behalf. Many particulars respecting their proceedings and confessions are given by Strype, from a manuscript in the library of Corpus Christi College, formerly called Bene't College. Yet were they scarcely set at liberty, before they again united in plotting against Cranmer.

The members of the council who were attached to Popery resolved to make another and a stronger effort. With the duke of Norfolk at their head, they went to the king, and said, " That the archbishop, with his learned men, had so infected the realm with their unsavoury doctrine, that three parts of the land had become abominable heretics, which might prove dangerous to the king, and produce the same commotions as had ensued in Germany."

Henry told Cranmer of this new accusation, that when he was brought before the council he should request to be confronted with his

accusers, and that if this were denied, and they proposed to commit him to prison, he should appeal to the king, and produce a ring which Henry gave him. The next morning Cranmer was summoned to appear ; he argued and entreated that his accusers should be present, but in vain ; he then appealed to the king, and produced the royal ring. On seeing this, they were greatly disconcerted ; but immediately rose and went to Henry, as was usual when that ring was sent to them. He blamed them for their conduct, charging them to abstain from such proceedings ; and thus Cranmer was again rescued from the malice of his enemies. He did not lose now the spirit of forgiveness he had previously displayed ; for, when shortly afterwards the duke of Norfolk was condemned for high treason, he exerted himself to prevent the sentence from being carried into effect.

Still the stake added victim to victim, one of whom was John Lassels, a gentleman, and one of the attendants of the king. He appears to have been the person who was the means of discovering the evil conduct of queen Catharine Howard, for which the Romish party bore him ill-will. While in prison, he wrote a long letter,

showing the errors of Papists in reference to the mass ; the closing paragraph thus firmly expresses the feelings of his heart : “ Now with quietness I commit the whole world to their Pastor and Herdsman, Jesus Christ, the only Saviour and true Messiah ; and I commend my sovereign lord and master, the king’s majesty, king Henry VIII., to God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Also, the queen, and my lord the prince, with this whole realm, over to the innocent and immaculate Lamb, that his blood may wash and purify their hearts and souls from all iniquity and sin, to God’s glory, and to the salvation of their souls. I do protest that the inward part of my heart doth groan for this ; and I doubt not but to enter into the holy tabernacle which is above, yea, and there to be with God for ever. Farewell in Christ Jesus. John Lassels, late servant to the king, and now, I trust, to serve the everlasting King, with the testimony of my blood in Smithfield.”

On the 8th of July, 1545, a proclamation was issued by the council, with the sanction of the king, rigorously forbidding any person from having Tyndale’s or Coverdale’s translation of the Scriptures, or any of the writings of

the Lollards and reformers, many of whom were mentioned by name.

At length, the king was on his death-bed. On January 27th, 1547, sir Anthony Denny had the honesty and courage to warn him of his state, desiring him to prepare for death, and remember his former life, counselling him to call on God for mercy through Jesus Christ. On the king expressing his grief for the sins of his past life, adding that he trusted in the mercies of Christ which were still greater, Denny inquired if any of the clergy should be sent for. The king said, if any were called it should be archbishop Cranmer ; and on finding himself rapidly declining, he sent for that prelate. When Cranmer arrived, the king was speechless; but on desiring him to give some sign whether he died in the faith of Christ, Henry pressed the archbishop's hand, and expired.

It is not for us to pronounce sentence on that monarch ; of the service he rendered the reformation, Burnet thus speaks : "He attacked Popery in its strongholds—the monasteries—and destroyed them all ; and thus he opened the way to all that came after, even down to our own days. So that, while we see

the folly and weakness of man in all his personal failings, which were very many, and very erroneous, we at the same time see the justice, the wisdom, and the goodness of God, in making him, who was the pride and glory of Popery, become its scourge and destruction ! and in directing his pride and passions, so as to bring about, under the dread of his unrelenting temper, a change which a milder reign could not have compassed, without great convulsions and much confusion. Above all, we ought to adore the goodness of God in rescuing us, by his means, from idolatry and superstition ; from the vain and pompous shows in which the worship of God was dressed up, so as to vie with heathenism itself ; and bringing us into a simplicity of believing, and a purity of worship, conformable to the nature and attributes of God, and the doctrine and example of the Son of God." The view thus given of the departed monarch by Burnet may be deemed too favourable : Henry was beyond doubt at heart a Papist, but the God of providence controlled his evil designs, and rendered them subservient to the accomplishment of many of his gracious purposes.

CHAPTER VI.

Reign of Edward vi.—His early piety—The princess Mary—Advance of the reformation—Lady Jane Grey—Reign of Mary—Dreadful persecution.

HENRY was succeeded by his only son, prince Edward, then only nine years of age. His father had given him much attention, and he was placed under able and pious tutors, chosen and superintended by Cranmer. It is delightful to have to describe one so young, as amiable, learned, and pious. “No pen,” says Fuller, “passeth by him without praising him, though none praiseth him to his full deserts.”* The charge of Cranmer at his coronation was peculiarly solemn, urging him to see God truly

* The account given by Ascham does not appear to be exaggerated. He states that, before his father’s death, Edward wrote Latin letters, and showed great eagerness for study. Three years later, Ascham describes him as fully master of Latin, able both to speak and write in that language, and then reading Aristotle in Greek. “Our king,” he says, “in talent, industry, steadiness, erudition, greatly surpasses his age, and the belief of other persons.”

worshipped, idolatry destroyed, images removed, and the tyranny of the bishops of Rome banished.

On this object the mind of Cranmer was now more enlightened, and more intent; and the lord protector, the earl of Hertford, afterwards created duke of Somerset, entered into his views. In the following affecting prayer, preserved by Strype, he sought aid from the Giver of all good: “I am, by appointment, thy minister for thy king, a shepherd for thy people, a sword-bearer for thy justice; prosper the king; save thy people; direct thy justice. I am ready, Lord, to do what thou commandest; command what thou wilt. Remember, O God, thine old mercies; remember thy benefits showed heretofore. Remember, Lord, me, thy servant, and make me worthy to ask. Teach me what to ask, and then give me what I ask. None other do I seek to, Lord, but thee, because none other can give it me.” It appeared, however, necessary to proceed with caution. Meanwhile, a general visitation of all the dioceses was made, to remove some of the superstitious observances, and to enforce certain injunctions set forth by authority. These measures tended greatly to the general good.

A book of homilies was soon set forth, and ordered to be used by all the clergy who were not authorized to preach. Cranmer earnestly supported this plan, but it was strongly opposed by Gardiner. A dispute also arose between them respecting the homily on Salvation. Gardiner said : "In baptism we are justified, being infants, before we can talk of the justification we can strive for. For all men receive their justification in their infancy in baptism, and if they fall again after baptism, they must rise again by the sacrament of penance." Such a statement is directly opposite to the word of God, and its error was strongly urged by Cranmer.

The princess Mary was greatly dissatisfied with any arguments of this kind. She stated to the protector that she thought all changes in religion, while the king was under age, improper, and reflected on the memory of her father. The duke exhorted her, in his reply, to study the Scriptures.. Latimer, who had been in prison for the truth's sake, was released from the Tower soon after the king's accession, and preached regularly before him. Many of his sermons are still extant. He was highly esteemed by the people, and much followed.

With great fidelity he exposed the absurdities of Romanism, and rebuked the fashionable vices of the times.

Two of the severest statutes against the Lollards, and the bloody act of the six articles, were now repealed. Various regulations were made, and superstitious rites, ceremonies, and processions, were forbidden by proclamation. The reformed liturgy was set forth, similar in many points to the one now in use. Peter Martyr, Bucer, Melancthon, and other foreign divines, assisted in this work ; and Calvin wrote to the protector, encouraging him to proceed with the reformation. A large proportion of the people, however, were too deeply attached to Romish superstitions to approve of these changes, and most angry discussions arose.

At Oxford, Peter Martyr commenced, in 1549, a course of Lectures on the First Epistle to the Corinthians. The Romanists assailed him as a heretic and blasphemer, when he came to treat on transubstantiation. He was then challenged to a public disputation. Martyr told the assembly which was in consequence gathered together, that he was come to lecture, and would accept the challenge as

soon as suitable arrangements could be made. The vice-chancellor considered his conduct reasonable, and dispersed the assembly. On a regular disputation being afterwards arranged, Martyr argued publicly with three champions of the Romish doctrine for four days ; while the same course was pursued at Cambridge by Ridley and some other divines. As they appealed to the Scriptures, and would not listen to the absurd subtleties of the schoolmen, their opponents had but little to say, and were fully refuted.

Civil disturbances now arose. So strong were the rebels in Devonshire and the west of England, that it was necessary to send troops against them. They presented a list of demands, all tending to the restoration of Popery, and thus showed their true character. At length, these and similar commotions were suppressed, but not without bloodshed. The leaders, among whom were several Romish priests, were executed, but their misguided followers received a free pardon.

These insurrections greatly weakened the power of the duke of Somerset. He had also given much offence by destroying several religious buildings and churches, to use the mate-

rials for Somerset House. It is said, that when the graves were opened to remove the bodies, many caskets were seen, full of the pope's pardons and indulgences, which had been purchased at a heavy expense, and buried with the dead. But, doubtless, Somerset fell a sacrifice to the intrigues of some leaders of the nobility, who sought to re-establish the supremacy of their order, as it existed in the preceding century. The chief of them was the earl of Warwick, a bold, unprincipled man, who now assumed the government. While this change alarmed the reformers, Gardiner and his party rejoiced. But disappointment awaited them. Warwick found it was his interest to countenance the reformation, though he encouraged his followers to scoff at religion. Faithfully, yet mildly, was he remonstrated with by Cranmer and Ridley ; others, like Latimer and Bradford, employed much stronger terms. A new form of ordination was agreed on, from which the popish ceremonies were excluded ; the images standing in churches and chapels were ordered to be destroyed ; and the prayers to saints were directed to be erased from the primers. In the year 1551, the articles were set forth by authority ; they

did not essentially differ from those subsequently promulgated by queen Elizabeth.

Special encouragement was given, at the same time, to the preaching of the gospel. The importance of listening to "God's word opened," instead of trusting to the services of others, or to the observance of superstitious ceremonies, was strongly urged by all the leading reformers. There was a pulpit, or preaching place, in the palace garden at Whitehall, where Latimer and others regularly preached on Sundays and holidays, to the king and the protector, while many of all ranks resorted thither. Small books, setting forth the doctrines of truth, were extensively circulated.

In 1533, the king's health seriously declined. As he felt his end approaching, he became very anxious for the future welfare of his subjects. He knew that if his sister Mary succeeded to the crown, she would destroy all that had been done for the reformation of religion. The duke of Northumberland and some others urged him to appoint by will that lady Jane Grey, a distant branch of the royal family, should be his successor. One motive on the part of Northumberland was, that he had

arranged a marriage between lady Jane and one of his sons, lord Guildford Dudley. Cranmer refused, for a long time, to sign the act of settlement, but at length he yielded to the earnest persuasion and commands of the king, and the assurances of the judges and law officers, that the sovereign was empowered to change the succession to the crown.

Edward expired on the 6th of July, 1553. Only a few hours before his death he thus prayed, thinking he was alone, but his words were written down by Dr. Owen, his physician, and four other attendants : “ Lord, deliver me out of this wretched and miserable life, and take me among thy chosen ; howbeit, not my will, but thine be done. Lord, I commit my spirit to thee : O Lord, thou knowest how happy it were for me to be with thee, yet for the sake of thy chosen, send me life and health, that I may truly serve thee. O my Lord God, bless thy people, and save thine inheritance. O Lord God, save thy chosen people of England. O my Lord God, defend this realm from papistry, and maintain thy true religion, that I and my people may praise thy holy name, for thy Son Jesus Christ’s sake.”

A considerable advance, it should be ob-

served, had been made during the short reign of Edward. At the death of Henry VIII., little more had been done than the casting off the supremacy of the pope, the abolition of the monasteries, and a limited permission to use the Scriptures in English. But at the decease of Edward image worship was prohibited, transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the mass were set aside, the use of the Scriptures was freely allowed, the traditions of men were rejected, the worship of the saints and the virgin no longer usurped the honour that is due to God alone, prayers were offered in the English tongue, the clergy were not prohibited marriage, and the belief in purgatory and indulgences was no longer encouraged. But, above all, salvation was proclaimed by faith alone—the faith through which we can be justified—the faith which proves its reality and power by the works of holiness. Still, as Burnet says, “The proceedings in king Edward’s time were so gentle and moderate, flowing from the calm temper of Cranmer, and the policy of others, that it was an easy thing for a concealed Papist to weather the difficulties of that reign, retaining all his influence, and having prevented that improvement which might have been expected to result

from the conscientious labours of an opposite character."

Some few of the reformers thought it might be the will of God, that the government should be placed in the hands of so pious and excellent a character as the lady Jane. But the greater part of them accorded with the nation in general, in disapproving Mary's deprivation of her right; while those who favoured Popery were zealous in her cause. The lady Jane had given way to the authority and persuasions of her relatives, and was proclaimed queen when only seventeen years of age, July 7th, 1553, but in thirteen days she resigned the crown. Mary was proclaimed queen on the 17th of July, and entered London in triumph on the 3rd of August.

On arriving at the Tower, she sent for the lord-mayor and aldermen, and confirmed a declaration previously made, by affirming, "that although her own conscience was stayed (or fixed) in matters of religion, yet she meant not to compel or strain other people's consciences, otherwise than God should, as she trusted, put in their hearts a persuasion of the truth."

The Protestants had strong claims on her

gratitude. It was chiefly to them she owed her easy ascent to the throne ; and Cranmer had before interposed in her behalf, and persuaded Henry to lay aside the intention he had formed of putting her to death. Yet she determined to reinstate, and that immediately and fully, the Romish religion. The Romish bishops were forthwith restored to their sees. It was ordered that none should preach or expound Scripture without special license ; and Cranmer, Latimer, Coverdale, and others, were committed to the Tower.

The greater part of the foreign Protestants were sent away, and their churches were taken from them. Above a thousand of the English, anticipating a severe persecution, had already left the kingdom. Most of them escaped in disguise as servants to the French and German Protestants. The council, therefore, ordered that none should go beyond sea, except they were really foreigners.

The coronation took place on the 1st of October, according to the Romish ceremonial. A few days after parliament was opened with "a mass to the Holy Ghost." The bishops of Lincoln and Hereford were deprived of their sees for withdrawing from this superstitious

service ; and one of the acts passed repealed all the laws made respecting religion during the reign of Edward vi., thus restoring Romanism with all its ceremonies.

It was the desire of Gardiner that the queen should marry lord Courtney, but, finding his plan not likely to be adopted, he promoted a marriage with Philip, king of Spain, the son of the emperor Charles v. Much discontent arose on this design becoming known. Even parliament, servile as it had been, besought the queen not to marry a stranger, and it was, in consequence, dissolved. Gardiner informed the emperor that the marriage of his son could not be effected without expending considerable sums of money to bribe persons of influence, and he borrowed a sum equal to £4,000,000 of our money, much of which was applied to this purpose.

The convocation of the clergy met at the same time as the parliament. Much disputation arose, but it was differently conducted to the public debates in the last reign. Then such conferences were held in the universities ; they continued for a considerable time, and all were free to speak so long as they confined themselves to the subject in question. But now the

point was first decided by the Romanists, only the appearance of argument was allowed, and the conference was conducted in the midst of London, when the government gave all possible encouragement to the dominant party.

An insurrection, headed by sir Thomas Wyatt, was made the pretext for putting lady Jane Grey to death, though his only design had been to prevent the marriage of the queen with the king of Spain, which subsequently took place. The amiable and pious sufferer, who had lain under sentence of death for six months, was aware that the first occasion against her would be seized. Without upbraiding her father, whose ambition had involved her in this peril, and had also brought ruin on himself, she thus wrote : "I must needs acknowledge that, being constrained, and, as you well know, continually persuaded, I seemed to consent, and therein grievously offended the queen and her laws." In the following terms she concludes her letter : " And thus, good father, I have opened unto you the state wherein I at present stand, whose death at hand, although to you, perhaps, it may seem right woful, to me there is nothing that can be more welcome, than from this vale of misery to aspire to that

heavenly throne of all joy and pleasure, with Christ our Saviour. In whose stedfast faith (if it be lawful for the daughter so to write to the father) may the Lord that hath hitherto strengthened you so continue you, that at the last we may meet in heaven."

On the 12th of February, her husband, lord Guildford Dudley, a youth of nineteen, was beheaded on Tower-hill. Within an hour afterwards, lady Jane suffered in the same manner, within the Tower. Her hard fate was deeply lamented by the people. Many uttered their opinions with greater force, as they saw several of the nobility, who had been most active in proclaiming her as queen, were now in authority, professedly Romanists, and secretly having promoted, if they had not actually urged her execution. It was observed, also, that several persons who had advised her death came to an untimely end. Among these was judge Morgan, who had pronounced upon her the capital sentence. He shortly afterwards became raving mad, and in this state he died, calling incessantly to have the lady Jane removed from his sight.

The principal preachers had been silenced on the queen's accession, and most of the mar-

ried clergy were expelled from their livings, and thrown penniless on the world with their wives and children. Nor was this all ; they were required to separate from their wives, and the lawfulness of the marriage of the clergy was, in contravention of Scripture, strongly denied.

According to Strype, the church was now furnished with ignorant priests, of scandalous lives, although professing chastity. Their chief employment was to mumble over the services in a language of which both themselves and their congregation were generally ignorant, and to quarrel with their parishioners for candles, purification pence, eggs on Good Friday, the quarterly offerings, and dirge grants—the usual fee for singing a mass, professedly to deliver a soul from purgatory.

The higher orders of ecclesiastics assumed great state and magnificence of apparel. They cared not for studying the Scriptures, or preaching the gospel, but generally attached themselves to their patrons, looking after their horses and dogs, taking care of their gardens, and keeping their accounts. “And,” adds Strype, “they were generally notorious for

their zeal and diligence in informing against the gospellers, and bringing them into trouble."

And yet such men were thus described by Bonner, in St. Paul's Cathedral : " It is to be known that priests and elders be worthy of all men to be worshipped for the dignity sake which they bear of God." He argued the likeness of a priest to the virgin Mary, because, referring to the consecration of the wafer, " by four words,* the priest doth make the very body of Christ ;" and again, because, as the virgin carried Christ in her arms, so the priest " lifts up the body of Christ, carrieth it and handleth it with his hands." " Therefore." he continued, " here is to be known, that the dignity of priests passeth the dignity of angels because there is no power given to any angels to make the body of Christ, whereby the lowest priest may do on earth what the highest angel in heaven cannot. Wherefore priests are to be honoured before all kings of the earth, princes, and nobles ; for a priest is higher than a king, happier than an angel, and maker of his Creator !" Such were the blasphemies uttered by Bonner, bishop of London, but to which the doc-

* *Hoc est corpus meum.*

trine of transubstantiation has given perpetuity.

In eighteen months from Mary's accession, Romanism had been gradually restored, and England was again fully subjected to papal authority.

The sanguinary laws, formerly enacted against all accounted heretics, were now enforced with the utmost severity. Rogers, Hooper, Taylor, and Saunders, were soon brought to the stake, impressing with their constancy even those who had no real esteem for the gospel. A large stone, with a rude inscription, on Aldham Common, in Suffolk, marks the spot where Taylor suffered ; and an old elm-tree, at Brentwood, in Essex, is an interesting memorial of another martyr, named Hunter. Opposite to this tree, and but a few yards from it, is the place where he

“ Received the seal of martyrdom in blood.”

Others suffered in various ways, and were then put to death. Sometimes there appeared but one martyr, at others two, or more, and in one instance thirteen were consumed in the same fire.

Some of these had attained high distinction, but this, so far from shielding them, exposed them to the most imminent perils. Thus Cran-

mer suffered at the stake the victim of persecution. Latimer was for a considerable time his guest at Lambeth ; but, on the revolution that happened at court after the death of the duke of Somerset, Latimer retired into the country, and resumed his preaching in the places where he considered it would be most useful. But his course was now rapidly hastening to a close.

Preaching was soon prohibited throughout the kingdom. Many were taken into custody, and the bishop of Winchester, then prime minister, having proscribed Latimer from the first, sent a messenger to him with a citation to the council. The messenger found him equipped and prepared for his journey, and on expressing his surprise, Latimer told him he was as ready to attend him to London, thus called to answer for his faith, as he ever was to take any journey in his life ; and that he doubted not but that God, who had enabled him to stand before two princes, would enable him to stand before a third, either to his eternal comfort or discomfort. The messenger then said he had only a letter to deliver, and then retired.

Latimer, on opening the letter, resolved to obey the citation to the council. He, therefore,

set out immediately, and on passing through Smithfield, where heretics were usually burned, he said cheerfully, "Smithfield has long groaned for me!" The next morning he waited on the council, who sent him to the Tower. Sentence was passed on him in a few days, and soon after it was carried into effect, as a similar one was on Ridley. When they came to the stake, Latimer lifted up his eyes and said, "God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear." He then prepared himself for suffering, saying to Ridley, "We shall this day, brother, light such a candle in England, as, by God's grace, shall never be put out." Such was the death of Hugh Latimer, bishop of Worcester.

Of him, Southee has truly said : "He, more than any other man, promoted the reformation by his preaching. The straightforward honesty of his remarks, the liveliness of his illustrations, his homely wit, his racy manner, his manly freedom, the playfulness of his temper, the simplicity of his heart, the sincerity of his understanding, gave life and vigour to his sermons when they were delivered, and render them now the most amusing productions of that age, and to us, perhaps, the most valuable."

Gardiner delayed his meal till he could receive tidings of fire being set to the pile of these illustrious men. But, whilst feasting, he felt the approach of mortal disease, the consequence of his vicious course of life. He was able to attend to his official duties a few days longer, when his body became so noisome that it was difficult to obtain him any attendants. His mental sufferings were great. Often did he exclaim, "I have sinned like Peter ; but I have not repented like him." Thus, the first of the wretched leaders of the English persecution of this period, was called to his solemn account.

In 1558, efforts, previously begun, were continued for establishing a tribunal like the inquisition. This was promoted by Philip, and a commission was appointed to constitute such a tribunal. The power and authority, according to Burnet, given to the inquisitors was excessive and uncontrolled. If any person disobeyed their orders in any manner, they could commit him to prison, and keep him there as long as they pleased. They might impose any fines they thought fit, and, if necessary, cause the fines to be levied by the Court of Chancery. Not only suspected persons were required to answer before them, but any witnesses they

thought proper to call might be “compelled to answer.” Nor were such extraordinary powers intrusted exclusively to the whole body; any three might proceed, by “all means and politic ways they could devise.”

The list of sufferers during the short reign of Mary includes individuals of every rank, age, and description; the blind, the lame, the helpless female, and even the infant but an hour old—all were remorselessly committed to the flames. The bishop, the priest, and the layman; the merchant, the manufacturer, the artisan, the labourer, and the beggar—were visited with the same insatiable cruelty. It was stated by lord Burleigh, the prime minister of queen Elizabeth, that the number of persons burned alive, during the last four years of Mary’s reign, amounted to two hundred and eighty-eight; and that the whole number of those who suffered death for religion, by imprisonment, tortures, famine, and fire, amounted to nearly four hundred individuals. Others reckon a larger number of sufferers, and state that four hundred were publicly put to death. Meanwhile, the loss and destruction of property were great. In the last parliament of her reign, a member for London openly declared that the

city was impoverished, and had lost by the proceedings of the last five years full £300,000, a sum equal to more than £5,000,000 now.

It is well to advert sometimes to these melancholy and distressing facts, that, as Foxe says, “ All readers and rulers may not only see how the Lord did work against her, therefore, but also by her may be advertised and learn what a perilous thing it is for men and women in authority, upon blind zeal and opinion, to stir up persecution in Christ’s church, to the effusion of Christian blood, lest it prove in the end with them, as it did here, that while they think to persecute heretics, they stumble at the same stone as did the Jews in persecuting Christ and his true members to death, to their own confusion and destruction.”

In the reign of Elizabeth, the pope and hierarchy, in all its branches, held her to be an usurper, and desired a sovereign of the Romish church. On May 29, 1588, the Spanish armada sailed from the Tagus, not only as an expedition to invade an enemy’s country, but, as the Litany prepared for this occasion was expressly entitled, “ against the English heretics ;” it was, however, signally and providentially overthrown.

CHAPTER VII.

The reformation in Scotland — Its necessity—Persecution—
Patrick Hamilton—Cardinal Beaton—Labours of John
Knox.

IT is desirable to glance at the circumstances of the northern part of our island, during the period of England's history which has just been described.

The state of Scotland did not, at the time through which we have been passing, exceed that of other countries where Popery had been dominant. The ecclesiastics, by availing themselves of the doctrines of purgatory and indulgences, had acquired full half of the wealth of the nation ; this gave them power, and they wielded it without control.

The lives of the ecclesiastics were exceedingly dissolute, and their ignorance extreme. Even the prelates were unacquainted with the Scriptures. All that was taught the laity was the repeating of aves and credes, confessing to a priest, paying occasionally for a mass, regu-

larly settling other exorbitant dues, going on pilgrimage, abstaining from flesh on Fridays, and similar observances.

As such a system could only be sustained by persecution, secret cruelties and outward violence were resorted to whenever deemed necessary. Of this there had been already many instances, and as the reformation advanced in other countries, those who were considered as heretics became increasingly objects of suspicion and hatred to the Romish prelates, who had the chief government of Scotland during the minority of James v.

Patrick Hamilton was one of their victims. Descended from the royal family, he attained to distinction in early life, and was appointed abbot of Fern before the twenty-third year of his age. On going to Germany, in pursuit of Divine knowledge, he became acquainted with Luther, Melancthon, and other reformers, but especially with Francis Lambert, under whose instruction he, by the blessing of God, so profited, that he was brought to clear views of the gospel of Christ, as appears from his Treatise on Faith and Works, entitled "Patrick's Places." He openly maintained the doctrine of this treatise in the University of Marpurg.

He thus clearly states the truth of Scripture as to "the faith of Christ :" "The faith of Christ is to believe his word, and to believe that he will help thee in all thy need, and deliver thee from all evil. Thou wilt ask me what word ? I answer, The gospel. He that believeth in Christ shall be saved. He that believeth the Son hath everlasting life. 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth in me hath everlasting life.' 'This I write unto you, that believing in the name of the Son of God, ye may know that ye have eternal life.' 'Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed ; but happy are they who have not seen, and yet believe in me.' 'All the prophets to him bear witness, that whosoever believeth in him shall have remission of sins.' What must I do that I may be saved ? The apostle answereth, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' 'If thou acknowledge with thy mouth that Jesus is the Lord, and believe in thy heart that God hath raised him up from the dead, thou shalt be saved.'

He that believeth not in Christ shall be condemned.' 'He that believeth not the Son shall never see life, but the wrath of God abideth upon him.' The Holy Ghost shall

reprove the world of sin, ‘Because,’ saith Christ, ‘they believe not in me.’ They that believe in Jesus Christ are the sons of God. Ye are all the sons of God because ye believe in Jesus Christ. He that believeth in Christ the Son of God is safe.”

On his return to Scotland, Hamilton, both privately and publicly, declared the truths set forth in the Scriptures, and ably exposed the errors and superstitions of the church of Rome. His preaching produced a great effect on the people, and alarmed the clergy. Archbishop Beaton invited him to St. Andrew’s, ostensibly to confer respecting his doctrines. A friar, named Alexander Campbell, had, therefore, many conversations with Hamilton, under the pretence of desiring instruction. But Beaton’s real design was, to procure matter of accusation against him; and finding how much the opinions of the reformer were opposed to the Romish doctrines, the prelates determined to proceed against him without delay.

Inducing the king, then a youth, to make a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Duthack, in Ross-shire, they seized Hamilton in his bed at midnight, and carried him to the castle. On the following day, the 28th of February, 1528,

he was brought before the bishops and clergy in the cathedral, and accused of holding the opinions of Luther. So far from denying them, he defended them with an ability that rendered his adversaries more intent on his destruction. He was, therefore, condemned as an obstinate heretic, ordered immediate execution, and led to the stake, which was prepared before the old college.

Amazed at the sight, the people supposed that all this was done to terrify Hamilton, but they were soon alive to the dreadful reality. When the fire was kindled, he cried with a loud voice, "Lord Jesus ! receive my spirit ! How long shall darkness overwhelm this realm, and how long wilt thou suffer this tyranny of men !" Campbell urged him to "turn" and to "call on the virgin ;" but Hamilton only replied, "Wicked man, thou knowest the contrary, and hast confessed the same to me. I summon thee to appear before the tribunal seat of Christ Jesus." He then expired. Campbell died a few days afterwards, in a frenzy of despair.

The University of Louvain now wrote to the University of St. Andrew's, highly applauding their proceedings, acknowledging that the zeal

of the Scottish university was equal to their own, and urging them to continue in the same course till the heretics were all destroyed, and especially to have “inquisitors or espies of books containing that doctrine.”

But the Romish clergy soon found that the martyrdom of Hamilton was a serious error. All ranks of the people eagerly inquired for what opinions he was burned, and not a few, convinced of their truth, cordially embraced them. Among them was Alexander Seaton, confessor to the king. During the next season of Lent, he preached a course of sermons, dwelling on the necessity of faith, repentance, and holiness, and being silent as to the worship of saints, pilgrimages, and purgatory. He was, therefore, suspected of heresy ; but the archbishop dared not proceed openly against him without the king's consent. This he endeavoured to obtain.

James was addicted to a dissolute course, for which Seaton reproved him ; but finding the king impatient under admonition, he guessed the reason of the change, and escaped to Berwick. He wrote from thence, offering to return if he might have a fair trial ; but receiving no answer, he proceeded to London, and

was admitted into the family of the duke of Suffolk. On the adversaries of the truth being in consultation respecting the burning of other individuals, a bystander, who was familiar with the archbishop, said, "My lord, if ye burn any more, except ye follow my counsel, ye will utterly destroy yourselves. If ye will burn them, let them be burned in cellars, for the smoke of master Patrick Hamilton hath infected as many as it blew upon!" There were, however, several martyrs during the ten years following the death of Hamilton, and many others were compelled to flee to foreign countries.

The archbishop of St. Andrew's died in 1539, and was succeeded by his nephew, David Beaton, who had long been considered by the pope well adapted to crush all heresies in Scotland. He proceeded on his work with great vigour. There were immediately several victims of his indignation. But more terrible scenes of cruelty succeeded. The king gave liberty to Beaton to proceed with greater activity ; a list of three hundred and sixty persons who were to be tried for heresy was then drawn out ; the list including many of the first nobility and gentry of the land, among whom was the

earl of Arran, the presumptive heir to the crown.

The ambitious politics of Beaton, however, had involved Scotland in a war with England, the events of which were disastrous, and stayed these cruelties. Under the earl of Arran, who was appointed regent, the Romanists were restrained, and a law was passed, permitting “every man to read the translation of the Old and New Testaments.” The Bible, or Testament, became common in almost every house whose owner could afford to purchase it. Many even pretended a regard for the Scriptures which they did not feel, and boasted that they had studied them secretly for years, hoping thus to gain the favour of the regent. The calm was, however, of short duration. The earl of Arran was weak and unsteady; Beaton regained the ascendancy, and the regent consented to his measures. Great atrocities were now committed, the particulars of which are confirmed by public records, and an account of which was printed within twenty years of their occurrence.

One distinguished man, not hitherto described, must now be briefly noticed. John Knox was born at Haddington, or at Gifford, a neighbour-

ing village, in Scotland, in 1505. His parents granted him the advantages of a liberal education. At the University of St. Andrew's he made rapid and considerable progress, under the tuition of John Major, an able divine, who had imbibed principles inimical to the lofty pretensions of the papacy. There, also, Knox taught philosophy as a lecturer, and was ordained a priest in the Romish church at an earlier age than usual.

While thus employed, he read the works of some of the fathers, particularly Augustine and Jerome; by them he was directed to the study of the Scriptures. He was also gradually emancipated from the trammels of the scholastic divinity. As he publicly advocated sentiments derived from the word of God, he soon became an object of suspicion to the Romanists, and, having quitted St. Andrew's, sentence was publicly passed upon him as a heretic.

At that period, the reformers were openly persecuted, and Knox was soon pursued. He was chiefly indebted for instruction in Divine truth to Wishart; whom he accompanied for some time. Wishart, however, having a presentiment of his martyrdom, obliged Knox to

leave him, and return to his pupils, to whose religious instruction he was very attentive. After concealing himself for some time, early in 1547 he took refuge in the castle of St. Andrew's, then held by the Protestants, who had lately put to death the Romish cardinal Beaton, by whom Wishart and others were burned. Here he preached a sermon against the errors of Popery, and delivered, as it was, with much of that energetic eloquence for which Knox became afterwards celebrated, it excited great attention ; and so successful were his labours during the few months he was at St. Andrew's, that, besides the garrison in the castle, a great number of the people of the town renounced Popery, and professed the Protestant faith, partaking together the Lord's supper.

On the last day of July, in the same year, the castle of St. Andrew's was surrendered to the French forces then in Scotland. The besiegers, however, engaged that the lives of all persons in it should be spared, on condition that they should be conveyed to France, and afterwards to any other country they might prefer.

This capitulation was violated on their arrival in France ; and, at the instigation of the pope

and the Romish clergy of Scotland, they were detained as prisoners. Knox was sent, with some others, to the galleys, where they were kept in chains, and treated with great severity. Though continually threatened with torture if they did not join in the Romish worship, they stedfastly refused ; and one day a finely painted wooden image of the virgin being forced into the hands of a prisoner, he threw it into the water, saying, “ Now let our lady save herself ; she is light enough, let her learn to swim ! ”

The health of Knox greatly suffered while in the galleys, which cruised off the coast of Scotland, not only from severe treatment, but also from an attack of fever. Still he expressed his implicit confidence in God. He found relief in earnest supplication, and expressed his feelings at that period in his Treatise on Prayer. He also wrote other pieces, among which was his Confession of Faith, and conveyed them to his friends.

On his liberation, in 1549, he proceeded to England. Edward vi. was then on the throne, and Cranmer was anxious to supply the realm with able preachers of the gospel, which were then so greatly needed. Knox was soon stationed at Berwick, where his labours were very

successful. Tonstal, then bishop of Durham, had renounced the pope's supremacy, and as a Romanist was exceedingly moderate ; yet he could not endure the doctrines of the reformer. All he could do was effected in exciting the enmity of the Romanists, and Knox was called upon to defend his tenets. He did so, and silenced his adversaries.

After labouring with extended usefulness at Newcastle, he married, and on the death of Edward vi. he continued to preach the gospel, even after the day on which the reformed worship was to cease.

As, however, he found himself closely watched, and his friends urged him to withdraw, he embarked for France, and landed safely at Dieppe, on January 28th, 1554. "Some will ask," he says, in a letter to his mother-in-law, "why did I flee ? Assuredly I cannot tell. But of one thing I am sure—the fear of death was not the chief cause of my fleeing. I trust that one cause has been to let me see that all had not a true heart to Christ Jesus, who, in the day of rest and peace, bore a fair face."—"I would not bow my knee before that most abominable idol (the mass) for all the torments that earthly tyrants can

devise, God so assisting me, as his Holy Spirit now moves me to write unfeignedly. And, albeit, I have in the beginning of this battle appeared to play the faint-hearted and feeble soldier, (the cause for which I remit to God,) yet my prayer is that I may be restored to the battle again."

After proceeding to Switzerland and visiting Dieppe, hoping to obtain information that would enable him to return to Scotland, he discovered that such a course was absolutely impracticable. He therefore went back to Switzerland, and settled at Geneva. "Here," says Dr. Alexander, "Knox found a home and a friend ; here, in conjunction with the illustrious Calvin, he matured his theological opinions, and settled in his mind the principles of his ecclesiastical polity ; and here he formed the resolution and the scheme of that bold and vast reform in the religious affairs of his own country, the accomplishment of which has invested his name with undying reverence in the memory of his nation.

"Here, too, that never-to-be-forgotten benefactor of his country, Melville, arrived as a humble pedestrian, with his Hebrew Bible in his belt, an unbefriended scholar, yet no beggar, for he had money in his purse, and a letter

to master Beza in his pocket, in whose society and under whose patronage he spent five years of study and of service, accumulating those stores of secular and theological learning, which enabled him to render to the religious interests of his country services second only to those of Knox ; and to its literary interests, services second to those of none. What sabbaths those must have been in Geneva, when Knox and Calvin preached, and when Beza and Melville, laying aside their ‘pleasant dalliance with the muses,’ would meet to refresh each other’s minds with high converse about the things of God and his church !”

In 1557, Knox received a letter from the earl of Glencairn and others ; it stated, that the professors of the truth continued stedfast, while the Papists declined in reputation, and it invited and encouraged him to return home. Other communications led him to delay his journey, but he addressed stirring and heart-searching letters to his countrymen, which appear to have had great influence in furthering the reformation.

The martyrdom of an aged priest, named Walter Mill, now excited universal horror, and stimulated the Protestants to a more open

avowal of their faith. About the same time, queen Mary died, and most of the English exiles prepared to return. Knox, therefore, landed at Leith, in May, 1559, at the very crisis when Mary, the queen regent, had summoned all the Protestant preachers to appear before her at Stirling, to answer for their conduct. He resolved to join them ; but the great body of the reformers remained at Perth, sending one of their number to court. The queen pretended to be appeased, and authorized their representative to assure them that she had stopped the trial ; but when the day came, the preachers were summoned, and outlawed for non-appearance.

On the day when the intelligence was received, Knox preached a sermon, in which he exposed the mass and image worship. Scarcely had he concluded, when a priest exhibited a rich altar-piece, decked with images, and prepared to say mass. Some idle persons were loitering in the church, one of whom, a boy, expressing aloud his disapprobation, was struck by the priest, when the boy, in return, threw a stone which broke one of the images. This excited the bystanders, and in a few minutes the altar and images were broken and trampled

under foot. A mob then assembled, who, in defiance of the magistrates and the reformed preachers, hastened to attack the strongholds of superstition, and soon laid the monasteries in ruins. But so far from encouraging this attack, Knox greatly exerted himself to repress the tumult, which really promoted the views of the queen regent, and thereby enabled her to excite many against the reformation, who had hitherto treated it with indifference.

Not only did Knox, however, continue to preach at St. Andrew's, but he visited the greater part of Scotland ; the attention of the nation was thus roused, their eyes were opened to the errors by which they had been deluded, and they panted for the word of life of which they had once been privileged to taste. Knox now resumed his situation as minister at Edinburgh, and composed a Protestant Confession of Faith, which received the sanction of parliament, the Romish prelates suffering it to pass unopposed.

On the 19th of August, 1561, Mary, who had been absent, returned to Scotland, and assumed the government. She had been educated in France from the age of six years, and was the widow of Francis II., who met with an

early and untimely death. Her residence in France, and her close intimacy with the Guises, who still retained their influence over her, unfitted her for the station she had now to fill. Accustomed to flattery, she was not prepared to endure contradiction patiently. The luxuries and levities of the French court, in which she delighted, were totally opposed to the habits and manners of Scotland. Arbitrary, and blindly attached to the Romish religion, she could not endure the independence of the nobles, and the preference of the reformation generally evinced by her subjects. In a letter to the pope, dated January 31st, 1564, Mary laments "the damnable errors" in which, on her return to Scotland, she found her subjects plunged, and assures the pontiff that her intention uniformly had been, from the time she left France, to re-establish the ancient religion. It is not surprising, therefore, that she lost the affections of the nation at large. Open persecution for conscience' sake had been too frequent to render the principles and practices of the Scottish queen a matter of indifference. And while the fires which consumed the martyrs were still fresh in the recollection of her people, the same scenes were ruthlessly exhibited in other countries.

The prominent station occupied by Knox soon brought him into collision with the queen. Shortly after her arrival, she sent for him to the palace, and brought grievous charges against him, to all which he replied with firmness and courage, blended with respect. In reference to his conduct, the English ambassador thus speaks to the English secretary of state : “ Your honour exhorts us to stoutness—I assure you the voice of one man is able in an hour to put more life in us than six hundred trumpets continually blustering in our ears.”

Soon afterwards, Knox was called to appear before the queen and her counsellors, to answer for a sermon in which he had noticed in severe terms the massacre of Vassy in France. She reproved him sharply, but he denied the exaggerations which were laid to his charge, and said that he was willing to do anything consistent with his office to content her majesty. As he left the room, he heard some of the attendants say, with apparent surprise, “ He is not afraid ! ” Knox promptly replied, “ Why should the pleasing face of a gentlewoman affright me ? I have looked in the faces of many angry men, and yet have not been affrighted above measure.”

As the queen declared that she “hoped, before a year was expired, to have the mass and the Catholic profession restored through the whole kingdom,” some of the clergy offered to dispute with the Protestant ministers. The first who presented himself was Quintin Kennedy, abbot of Crosraguel, and a public disputation took place between him and Knox, in September, 1562, respecting the sacrifice of the mass, in which the victory was gained by the reformer.

In March, 1564, Knox married the daughter of lord Ochiltree, an amiable and excellent nobleman. In the following year, the earl of Murray, and other Scottish nobles, resorted to arms against the queen, but Knox took no part in the revolt. Early in 1566, a crisis to the Protestants appeared impending ; a messenger arrived from the cardinal of Lorraine, with a copy of the league recently formed in France, for the extirpation of the Protestants, to which the queen attached her signature. She had fully prepared to execute the project, when her measures were defeated by the confederacy of her husband, Darnley, with some of the Protestant nobles, and the assassination of her favourite, Rizzio. As the anger of the queen

was greatly excited, Knox was recommended to withdraw from Edinburgh for a time, and he visited England.

It was during his absence that the events occurred which excluded Mary from the throne. The murder of Darnley, her hasty marriage with Bothwell, and her proceedings against the Protestant nobles, so greatly excited the Scottish nation against her that she was speedily obliged to leave her capital. On her subsequent imprisonment and death we do not enter, as irrelevant to our present design.

Knox returned, and preached at the coronation of the infant king, James vi., but objected to some of the ceremonies used on that occasion. At this time, he urged that the queen should be judicially proceeded against for the crime of which she was personally accused. The earl of Murray being settled as regent, the Protestant faith became firmly established. The work on which Knox's heart had been so ardently set, and in which he had so earnestly laboured, was now completed, and he trusted that he should be released from public affairs, and spend the remainder of his life in preparing for the event of which his infirmities were so many mementos.

But the partisans of Mary were not subdued, and they resolved to murder the regent Murray. Hamilton, of Bothwellhaugh, had been spared by Murray, when condemned and actually brought forth to execution ; but that very man became the regent's assassin. Much consternation was excited by this dreadful act. Many even of Murray's enemies lamented his loss, while those who had sheltered the murderer soon became anxious to be free from the imputation of being accessory to so atrocious a deed.

The grief of Knox at this event deeply affected his health and spirits. A stroke of apoplexy speedily followed, from the effect of which he never fully recovered. Still he was able to preach on the mornings of the Lord's day, and he continued to manifest his ardent desire for the welfare of his country. Shortly afterwards, his position became critical, from the queen's partisans obtaining possession of Edinburgh. His life was now threatened, and attempts were made to assassinate him, but, happily, they failed. His friends were obliged to watch his house at night, and a number of the inhabitants, with his colleague in the ministry, entreated him to remove to some

place of safety. At length, he reluctantly consented. The necessity for so doing had become, indeed, imperative ; for the queen's party gave many proofs of their enmity, and a musket-ball had actually been fired into the room where he was seated. But, having removed from the place where he usually sat, he providentially escaped.

Knox retired to St. Andrew's, where he continued to preach, although unable to walk to the pulpit without help. James Melville, who attended his ministry during that period, says : "I heard him teach the prophecies of Daniel that summer and the winter following. I had my pen and little book, and took away such things as I could comprehend. In the opening up of his text he was moderate for the space of half an hour, but when he entered on application, he made me so thrill that I could not hold a pen to write. He was very weak ; I saw him every day he taught go slowly and warily, with a furring of martins about his neck, a staff in the one hand, and good godly Richard Ballenden, his servant, holding up the other arm-pit, from the abbey to the parish church, and then, by the same Richard and another, lifted up to the pulpit, when he was

obliged to lean at his first entrance, but before he had done his sermon, he was so active and vigorous, that he was like to ding the pulpit in blads,* and fly out of it." The same writer also says : " Mr. Knox would sometimes come in and amuse himself in our college yard, and call us scholars unto him, and bless us, and exhort us to know God and his work in our country, and stand by the good cause ; to use our time well, and learn the good instructions, and follow the good example of our masters."

A cessation of arms being agreed on, the citizens of Edinburgh sent a deputation to St. Andrew's, requesting Knox to return and resume his ministry among them ; he complied, and was received with great joy. Knox preached once more in his own pulpit, the last sabbath in August, 1572, but his voice had become so weak that scarcely one-half the congregation could hear him. He, therefore, requested that a smaller place might be provided, and the Tolbooth church was selected, where he delivered to the people some homilies on the sufferings of Christ, often expressing an ardent desire to finish his course while preaching that doctrine.

* Beat the pulpit to pieces.

Here he preached while strength continued, but it was greatly impaired by tidings of the massacre in Paris on Bartholomew's day. His end was now rapidly advancing. In his last illness, he sent for the ministers of the churches in Edinburgh, and most affectionately and faithfully addressed them, urging their continued proclamation of "the glorious gospel of the blessed God." He was then visited by the chief nobility of the town, among whom was lord Morton, afterwards regent of the kingdom, as well as by some pious ladies of rank, and many godly men, none of whom he suffered to depart without a word of comfort or exhortation, suited to their respective circumstances.

Sensible that death was approaching still more nearly, he often spoke to the following effect: "Come, Lord Jesus ! Sweetest Saviour, into thy hands I commend my spirit. Look, I beseech thee, with favour upon this church which thou hast redeemed, and restore peace to this afflicted commonwealth. Raise up pastors after thine own heart, who may take care of thy church ; and grant that we may learn, as well from the blessings as the chastisements of thy providence, to abhor sin, and love thee with full purpose of heart." Then, turning to those

about him, he would say, "Oh, serve the Lord with fear, and death will not be terrible ; yea, blessed and holy shall death be to those who have felt the power of the death of the only begotten Son of God." Being asked if he felt much pain, he replied, "I cannot look upon that as pain which brings on the end of mortality and trouble, and is the beginning of life." He died, worn out in his Master's service, but without apparent suffering, on November 24th, 1572. He was interred two days after, in the churchyard of St. Giles's, his funeral being attended by several persons of rank who were then at Edinburgh. The earl of Morton, that day chosen regent, said, when Knox was laid in the grave : "There lies one, who in his life never feared the face of a man ; who hath been often threatened with dog and dagger, but yet hath ended his days with peace and honour. For God's providence watched over him in a special manner, when his very life was sought."

Against Knox much has often been urged, and we have no disposition to deny that he had his faults ; but those parts of his conduct which have most frequently been seized and expatiated on by his foes, are mainly to be ascribed to the times in which he lived, and the

peculiar circumstances in which he was placed. What Seckendorff has said of Luther may justly be applied to Knox: "The assertions frequently made respecting him show that the authors do not write a history, but a satire; and according to the usual manner of sophists, would deduce most dreadful accusations from trifling and venial circumstances. But enough has been said respecting such charges, the grounds for which these censors think they have discovered in some free expressions; but neither the whole nor the greater part of the writings of the reformer justify the imputation of excessive bitterness or freedom. Many words and much phraseology, which at this day would be accounted contumelious or objectionable, at that time were in common use, and could be uttered without impropriety, nor were the lighter expressions accounted incorrect." A slight reference to events occurring meanwhile in Germany, must now conclude this volume.

CHAPTER VIII.

Reformation in Germany—Diet at Spires—Diet at Augsburg
—Luther's illness and death—The Council of Trent—Memo-
rials of Luther and Melancthon.

THE history of the reformation in Germany presented, in consequence of the Divine blessing on the varied instrumentality of its agents, much that was highly encouraging to continued and zealous exertions. But again and again formidable difficulties arose, and dark clouds gathered and increased over the bright and glowing scene. A bookseller at Buda, who had circulated the New Testament and the writings of Luther, was burned at a stake, surrounded by a pile of his books. Other enormities were at the same time committed.

Luther was deeply grieved by these cruelties, and there were other circumstances which occasioned him much pain. Some resorted to force, and engaged in insurrections; but with him they had no connexion, and the principles

on which they acted were opposed to his own. For a great part of two years he aimed to restore peace, and it was only when his efforts failed, and the insurgents yielded themselves up to ungovernable rage, that he urged the authorities to violent measures, thus departing from the spirit he ought undeviatingly to have maintained.

No wishes of the emperor to root out heresy from Germany proved to be realized. Peace was favourable to further reformation. A diet of the empire was held at Spires in 1529, in which the Popish party was triumphant. No alterations were to be permitted in states still adhering to Popery ; though changes were to be made in other countries. The mass where it was abolished was to be restored, if preferred, and the gospel was to be preached without reference to disputed points, and according to the interpretation of the church.

Against this decision the adherents of the reformation entered their solemn *protest*. It was signed by six princes, and the deputies of fourteen imperial cities, and immediately published and circulated throughout Germany. Such was the origin of the term *Protestant*, which is now so generally used.

A calm continued, notwithstanding threatenings of evil in Germany, for some years. Pope Paul III., the successor of Clement, avowed great zeal for reformation. A consultation of cardinals and prelates appointed by him to inquire into abuses presented their report. It was not designed to be made public, but a copy fell into the hands of Protestants, who printed it with notes, some of which were from the pen of Luther.

As⁴ Luther was summoned to appear at a general diet at Augsburg, in April, 1529, his friends were filled with apprehension for his safety. It was supposed that snares would be laid in his path. Tidings were brought of a compact of nobles, who had bound themselves on oath to seize, strangle, or drown him. He asked Frederick in consequence for his safe-conduct; his reply was, that none was needed; and accompanied it by letters of recommendation and money for the journey.

Luther now set off on foot. On arriving at Weimar, where the elector held his court, he preached in the castle chapel. The invitation to do so was a proof of the prince's favour. It was St. Michael's day, but, contrary to the universal practice, he said nothing of the

angels, but strongly denounced hypocrisy and self-righteousness. His calmness and composure awakened the astonishment of those who were acquainted with his perilous circumstances.

At Nuremberg he borrowed a monk's frock, as his arrival was made known, and he wished to make a suitable appearance. Accompanied from thence by two friends, he proceeded on his way. Suddenly attacked by disease, they were much alarmed, and he thought he should die, but he rapidly recovered. Cajetan, before whom he was to appear, would greatly have excited the apprehensions of a mind inferior in vigour and in faith. He was one of the most zealous advocates of the very theology, called the scholastic, which Luther had violently assailed. He was already declared a heretic, but he refused to retract : a prison was therefore his lot, and should he escape, any who dared to receive him would be visited by excommunication.

The result of the diet was an effort to reconcile the parties directly at issue, but one that signally failed. A confession of faith was prepared by the Protestant party, of which Mr. Waddington says : " When we compare it

with the controversial writings, or exegetical treatises, or even private correspondence of the reformers, we are struck, not only with the moderation of its language, but with the cautious, if not timid, exposition of some of the doctrines contained in it. It is evident that one great object with its composers was conciliation. They nourished a hope, that by professions of good-will and general orthodoxy —by proclaiming their adherence to the church in all essentials—by making it difficult to detect in their creed any indisputable tendency to schism or heresy—they might at least escape a positive sentence of condemnation. Therefore they took pains to show, that the difference turned on questions not material, matters of ceremony, or observance, or discipline, placed for the most part within the dispensing power of the pope."*

To attempt to conciliate the pope and his hierarchy by such means was worse than useless. They would interpret them as indications of conscious weakness, and as preparatory to entire submission. If, however, they were addressed to the imperial court, and particularly to Charles, as appears probable, the course

* History of the Reformation, vol. iii. p. 64.

taken was unworthy the cause espoused. Melancthon has incurred the chief blame for it, but this ought to have been shared with others. Luther, though he did not admire the tone of this address, allowed it to pass unaltered through his hands, and expressed his general satisfaction with it.

The movement, however, failed so far as Protestants were concerned. When the diet closed, a fierce edict was published, forbidding all changes in doctrine or worship, enjoining the restoration of rites, ceremonies, and images, commanding the observance of fasts and festivals, and the invocation of saints, directing the rebuilding of monasteries which had been destroyed, and the restoration of their revenues; and providing for its execution a military force.

In the month of July, 1545, Luther left the city of Wittemberg. In the month of January, 1546, he commenced a journey under many bodily infirmities, and from the overflow of the river Issel was five days on the road. He was accompanied by his three sons, John, Martin, and Paul, and his steady friend, Justus Jonas. His health now, however, rapidly declined, and on the 17th of February he seemed dangerously

ill. After many devout declarations, he said : “ Our God is the God from whom cometh salvation : God is the Lord by whom we escape death.” He then became silent, and his powers began to fail him ; but when several present addressed him, “ Reverend father, you die in the constant profession of Christ and his doctrine, which you have preached ?” he distinctly said, “ Yes !” and spoke no more for about a quarter of an hour afterwards. Between two and three o’clock in the morning of February 18th, with his hands clasped together, and without a finger or a feature being disturbed, he gently breathed his last. *

The character and labours of Luther require no eulogium. To the New Testament in the German language he added in succession the various books of the Old Testament. All these portions of his translation are of extreme rarity. He made his version directly from the Hebrew and the Greek ; it is represented as being uncommonly clear and accurate, and its style in a high degree pure and elegant. In all his proceedings, we discover no aim at personal gratification, but disinterestedness in alliance with an inextinguishable zeal. We are struck

* Justus Jonas’s Account of Luther’s Death.

by the extent and variety of his labours as an author. His compositions of all kinds, including sermons and epistolary disquisitions, are estimated by his eminent biographer, Seckendorff, at the extraordinary number of eleven hundred and forty-seven. They are distinguished by vigour rather than by elegance of style.

Ardent as he was in temper, he yet displayed much kindness of spirit. His frankness of disposition was obvious at the first interview, and his ready communication from his rich stores rendered conversation with him singularly interesting and profitable. Especially was this the case from his concern to diffuse religious knowledge. Still more engaging was he in the domestic scene. The visitor was sure to witness there a pleasing union of religious service with conjugal and parental affection.

As a preacher, he acquired a just and great celebrity. Here his zeal for truth found its highest and noblest sphere. He dispensed it eagerly from a full mind. Attention was aroused by the boldness and novelty of his ideas, and sustained by the ardour which the preacher exhibited. His diction had all the copiousness of a fervent imagination, and

his delivery was aided by a clear and impressive elocution. The results of his diversified labours await the revelations of the last great day.

A diet met at Augsburg, in 1555, and was opened in the name of the emperor. After various disputes, acts were passed to the effect that the Protestants who followed the confession of Augsburg should be for the future considered as entirely free from the jurisdiction of the Roman pontiff, and from the authority and superintendence of the bishops ; that they were left at perfect liberty to enact laws for themselves relating to their religious sentiments, discipline, and worship ; that all the inhabitants of the German empire should be allowed to judge for themselves in religious matters, and to join themselves to that church whose doctrine and worship they thought the most pure and consonant with the spirit of true Christianity ; and that all those who should injure or prosecute any person under religious pretences, and on account of their opinions, should be declared and proceeded against as public enemies of the empire, invaders of its liberty, and disturbers of its peace. The deplorable calamities which had long desolated the empire were terminated by these acts, and the refor-

mation was established in many parts of the German empire.

Still Popery survived every assault, and no effort was spared by its adherents to shake off every incumbrance, to regain power, and to assert dominion. One of its successes stands connected with the city of Trent.

It was in the church of Santa Maria that the famous council was held, which has made the name of Trent familiar to the world. The council was first opened in 1545, and extended through a period of eighteen years. And in that church is still found a very fine picture, in a high state of preservation, containing the portraits of the most distinguished members of that ecclesiastical conclave.

Such a convocation had been ardently desired, not only by all the states in Christendom, but at first by Luther himself, who supposed that such measures might be taken as would compose the dissensions of the world. But the pope, Paul III., whose spirit may be gathered from his decree against Henry VIII., had other objects in view. Having a ready tool in the ambitious emperor of Germany, Charles V., and being well supported by his legates in the council, an influence was soon acquired over

the crowd of ignorant and indigent Italian bishops which formed the bulk of the assembly, and the worst consequences followed. One of the first acts of the council was to class the apocryphal books with the inspired records, alone held sacred by the Jews and the first Christians ; and another was to authorize the Latin Vulgate, as the only version to be consulted. Doctrines, hitherto received with some latitude of interpretation, were confirmed by the highest Romish authority ; and many mere traditional rites were declared to be essential parts of worship.

The breach between Protestantism and Popery was thus widened, never to be repaired. A clear and decisive line was drawn between Christ and Antichrist. The members of that council shut the door—till then partially open—to keep out every ray of light that might tend to the reformation of their system, while in the face of the world they avowed their determination stedfastly to adhere to every cherished error.

The Protestant princes were already in arms, and had assembled a considerable force to meet the onset of the emperor, who had been reinforced by all the papal troops, and a division or two of Flemings ; but the former,

though commanded by men of character and courage, lost their advantage by delay. Charles, however, by his superior energy and policy, gained several successes over the reformers, and in the issue, the elector and the margrave fell into his hands. But the pope, fearing lest Charles should turn his victorious arms against Rome itself, withdrew his troops, and found means to check the emperor's triumphs.

Time was thus given to the reformers to prepare for new struggles. Now commanded by Maurice, who had seized Saxony, the electoral dominions of his imprisoned kinsman, he hotly pursued Charles with his troops, and nearly succeeded in making him a prisoner. He entered Innspruck at midnight, only a few hours after the emperor and his attendants had left it, with all their baggage, money, and papers, to be plundered by the Saxons. Charles, in miserable plight, and suffering severely from the gout, fled in rain and darkness over the Alps, and, at length, to Villach, in Carinthia, but scarcely thought himself secure in that remote town.

From that time the star of that ambitious monarch may be said to have set for ever. The short remainder of his reign shows nothing

but reverses. Deeply dejected and overwhelmed with bodily infirmities, he determined to resign the entire sovereignty of his several dominions to his son Philip, retaining only a pension of one hundred thousand crowns. He retired to the monastery of St. Justus of Placentia, in Spain, where, for a time, he amused himself with trifles. At length, he fell into the deepest self-mortification and asceticism, and celebrated, on one occasion, his own funeral obsequies in person. This last act of folly was too much for his shattered constitution, and the next day he was seized with fever, which terminated his life.

Soon after, pope Paul III., who had convoked the council of Trent, and was its presiding evil genius, ended his imperious and violent reign, at enmity with all the world, and chiefly those of his own household. Ere long, the leading members of his family were condemned to the punishment their crimes deserved. The principal persecutors of the reformation all disappeared from the theatre of Europe about the same time.

The city of Wittemberg, once so famed as the seat of a university and convents, is now decayed and uninviting, except for its associa-

tion with Melancthon and Luther. The university has been removed to Halle, the convents are suppressed, and the once celebrated town-hall and churches are but the antiquated shades of former splendour. A bronze statue of Luther, of massive and elaborate workmanship, recently erected, meets the view of the traveller; on it there is the appropriate inscription—"If it be God's work, it will endure—if man's, it will perish." Immediately behind this memorial the town-hall still stands, containing a few relics of the reformer: the rosary of the old monk, the top of a chalice from which he once administered the wine of "The Supper," several of his manuscripts, and his portrait, by his friend and admirer, Lucas Cranach. In the *stadtkirche*, or cathedral of the city, Luther had often officiated; and here pictures, statues, and altar-pieces, may be examined as memorials of bygone days. A visit may also be paid to the monastery where Luther lived, and to the room he occupied; here may be seen the seat and table where he had considered his course, and resolved on his renunciation of papal authority; his diploma, and many manuscripts, his seal, his ale-cup, and other memorials. A book is kept here for

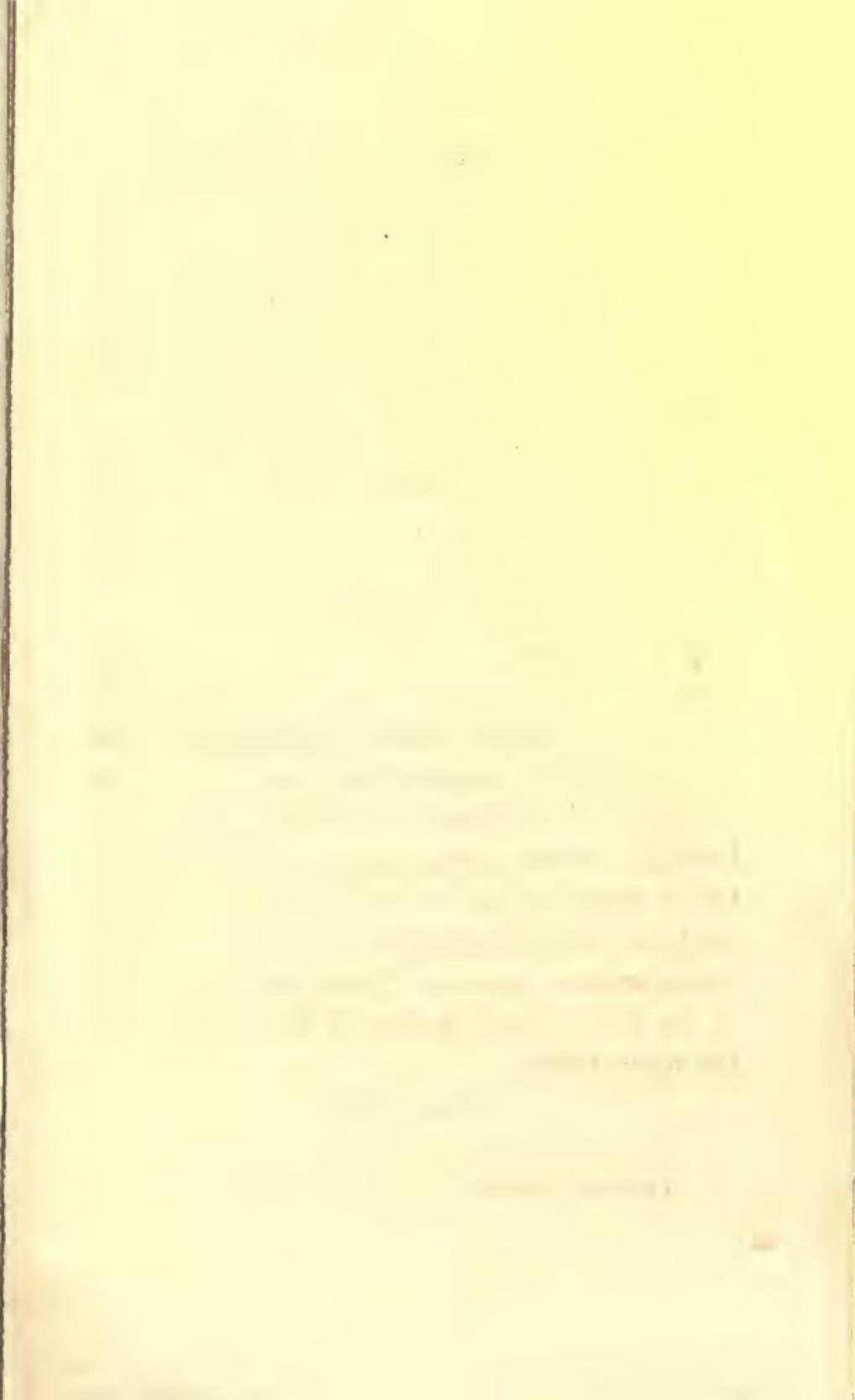
visitors, and over the door of one of the rooms is written the name of Peter the Great by his own hand, in chalk, which is now preserved under a glass frame. The spot may also be observed where the papal bull was committed to the flames by the reformer, in the midst of assembled senators, professors, citizens, and students. The event and scene are commemorated by a living monument—an oak has been planted, and is surrounded by firs and a palisading, within which some of the sweetest flowers of nature are left to grow. From thence the traveller may proceed to the schloss, or castle church, where Luther affixed his ninety-five theses against indulgences — where he often preached—where his bones and the remains of Melancthon are deposited, under tablets of bronze, which mark their separate graves. On the way to this church from Luther's cell a house is passed, bearing the concise and expressive words, “Here lived, and taught, and died, Philip Melancthon.”

One fact strikes us with peculiar impressiveness, as we review the course which has now reached its conclusion : it is, that every evil of Popery is to be traced to a departure from the

explicit and solemn requirements of the revealed will of God. No wonder, then, at the aversion it has displayed throughout its history to the examination and diffusion of the lively oracles of Jehovah. "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."*

A clear perception of this fact becomes eminently practical, if, while it reveals the true character of Popery, it points out with equal distinctness the only means of its extinction. As darkness must be vanquished by light, the only antagonism for the grossest forms of error is truth—truth in its divinity, and purity, and power. What need then is there of the aid of the Holy Spirit, whose office is to lead us into all truth ! To Him let us look continually, humbly, fervently, believably ; and in answer to the supplications which accompany enlightened and zealous exertions, God will, according to his promise, root out Popery from the hearts of his people, and destroy it from the face of the whole earth.

* John iii. 20.





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